

HIJAB

THE ISLAMIC COMMANDMENTS OF HIJAB

NEWLY REVISED & EXPANDED EDITION



DR. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL MEMON MADANI

MADANIA PUBLICATIONS

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In the name of Allah; the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds; and peace and blessings be upon the most Honorable of Messengers, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness, until the Day of Judgment.

Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are all for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds...

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَإِذَا بَدَأْتُمُ الْمَسَاءَ فَاذْكُرُوا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْتَدُوا
عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْبُحْبُوحِ

HIJAB

THE ISLAMIC
COMMANDMENTS OF HIJAB

Dr. Mohammad Ismail Memon Madani



Translation: *Dr. Mohammad Sadiq*



MADANIA PUBLICATIONS

© 2010 Madania Publications
First Edition 1995
Second Revised and Extended Edition February 2011

Printed and bound in the United States of America on acid-free paper

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Revised by: S. Ahmad
Copyediting: Meha Ahmad
Book Design: Arc Manor, LLC
Arabic Calligraphy: Mohammad Alagha & Muhammad Zakariya
Cover Design: MK & ZH

Library of Congress: 2010941689
ISBN: 9781936157006

Distributed in USA by

Al-Rashad Books
sales@al-rashad.com
1-330-388-4103

Darul Hikmah Bookstore
bookstore@islamicbookcenter.org
1-716-894-5715

Distributed in Canada by

Al Zahra Booksellers
info@alzahraonline.com
1-416-312-7213

Distributed in UK by

Azhar Academy Ltd. London
sales@azharacademy.com
+44-208-911-9797

Distributed in South Africa by

Darun Nashr Islamic World
info@kmsz.org.za
+27(11) 852-4629/39

Published by

Madania Publications
New York USA ☎ 1-716-480-0163
www.madaniapublications.com ✉ info@madaniapublications.com

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful*

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ رَوَّاجِكِ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْبِنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِ
بِيهِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَى أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذِينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

○ Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them. That will make it more likely that they are recognized, hence not teased. And Allah ﷻ is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I thank Allah ﷻ for His mercy and guidance in this work. I also wish to thank Dr. Muhammad Ismail Memon Madani for his inspiration and encouragement in translating this book. He was also kind enough to review the entire book and suggest valuable changes before it was published. I would also like to thank Maulana Ibrahim Memon and Brother M. A. Qazi for their assistance in correcting the translation of various terms and proper nouns. I am thankful as well to Mrs. Nauman for helping me in the translation of Chapter Four of this book and all the brothers and sisters who read the manuscript and suggested valuable changes. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my family, especially my sons Irfan and Javaid Tawheed, who have assisted me every step of the way in this work. May Allah ﷻ be pleased with them.

DR. MOHAMMAD SADIQ

TRANSLITERATION KEY

ء (أ) ‘(the *hamza* is produced by a sudden stop in the airstream similar to the sound in the middle of the exclamation, *uh-oh*.)

ا *a, ā*

ب *b*

ت *t*

ث *th* (is pronounced like the *th* in *thick* and *thumb*)

ج *j*

ح *h* (a heavy *h* sound produced in the center of the throat)

خ *kh* (a guttural *k* sound produced in the upper throat and sounding similar to the *ch* in German as in *Bach*.)

د *d*

ذ *dh* (is pronounced like the *th* in *though* and *thus*)

ر *r*

ز *z*

س *s*

ش *sh*

ص *ṣ* (an emphatic *s*)

ض *ḍ* (an emphatic *d*)

ط *ṭ* (an emphatic *t*)

ظ *ẓ* (an emphatic *dh*)

ع ‘, *a*, *i*, *u* (produced in the center of the throat)

غ *gh* (a guttural *g* sound produced in the upper throat)

ف *f*

ق *q* (a heavy *k* sound)

ك *k*

ل *l*

م *m*

ن *n*

و *w*

ه *h*

ي *y, ī, i*

ﷺ *Raḍiya Allahu ‘anhā*—may Allah ﷺ be pleased with her (used following mention of a female companion of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ)

ﷺ *Raḍiya Allahu ‘anhū*—may Allah ﷺ be pleased with him (used following mention of a male companion of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ)

ﷺ *Raḍiya Allahu ‘anhum*—may Allah ﷺ be pleased with them (used following mention a group of companions of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ)

ﷺ *Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa Ṣallam* – may the peace and blessings of Allah ﷺ be upon him (used following mention of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ)

ﷻ *Subḥānahū wa Ta‘ālā* – Sublime and High is He

ﷺ *‘alaihi al-Salām* - may peace be upon him (used following mention of prophets)

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

By the grace of Allah ﷻ, Madania Publications is honored to present a new revised and extended translation of Hadrat Dr. Ismail Memon's book on hijab. We ask Allah ﷻ to use this book to help bring Muslims back to the authentic teachings of His Beloved Messenger ﷺ.

Hijab is one of the most commonly misunderstood teachings of Islam. Many Muslims have forgotten the importance of this command. Often, even those who wish to practice hijab are not fully aware of all of its requirements. We thus felt that it was important to publish this book so that the authentic teachings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ regarding the golden standard of hijab, which is closest to *taqwa*, is preserved and so that the proofs defending the prophetic practice are highlighted—because if we do not uphold the prophetic standard, it may be lost in due time.

The purpose of this book is not to explain the wisdom or worldly benefits of adhering to the Islamic commandments of hijab. Rather, this book is written for those who accept the authority of the Qur'an and hadith and want to know what the legal Shari'a ruling is in regards to hijab. This book aims to present the Quranic ayas and hadith on the subject, which speak for themselves, along with the opinions of scholars which are closest to the path of *taqwa* so that those seeking the life of *taqwa* may find guidance. This book is for the person who asks: "What is the proper and best way I can practice hijab, as it was practiced by the Prophet's ﷺ community, according to the Shari'a?"

We recognize that due to the cultures and societies many of our readers have been raised in, they may have a difficult time accepting some of the authentic teachings of the Shari'a regarding hijab. They must remember however that the rational person will not object to a command once he or she knows that the command is from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. The sin of objecting to a command which is clearly a part of Shari'a is far worse a sin than failing to practice that

command. It is therefore vital for those who feel they are unable to fully practice the teachings found in this book not to raise objection to the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith, nor ridicule those wishing to live the life of *taqwa*. Readers should keep in mind that the purpose of this book is to educate the reader regarding the practices of believing women at the time of Prophet ﷺ and about the importance of following their noble example.

Madania Publications is honored to present to you this truly excellent resource on the commandments of hijab according to the Qur'an and Sunna. We pray that this book is helpful in assisting the believing men and women to follow the best example taught by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ on how to live the life of modesty and *taqwa*.

MADANIA PUBLICATIONS

Friday, January 7th 2011

Buffalo, NY, USA

“For him who holds fast to my Sunna, at the time of the corruption of my Umma, is the reward of 100 martyrs.”

-Our Blessed Prophet ﷺ [Sunan Al-Baihaqi]

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

All Praise be to Allah ﷻ. We praise and seek guidance from Him, we have faith in Him and we place our trust in Him. We seek the protection of Allah ﷻ from the evil of our *nafs* (self) and our deeds. May He shower *ṣalāt* and *salām* on our Blessed Prophet ﷺ and on his family and his *Ṣaḥāba* رضي الله عنهم.

I have made every attempt to use simple and contemporary English in the translation of this book. However, where a simple English word could not be found to convey the meaning [as was the case many times] either the original word in Urdu or Arabic was retained with a footnote explaining its meaning or a word from old English was substituted. Such words have been italicized and are defined in the glossary.

I also edited the book leaving out some parts from the original text which were repetitious. These editorial changes were reviewed and approved by the author of the original book, Dr. Muhammad Ismail Memon Madani.

My main objective in translating this book was to provide my Muslim brothers and sisters and our youth living in North America and other Western countries with an authentic piece of work in the English language on the necessity of hijab so that they could read it and appreciate the wisdom behind these golden commandments of Islam.

May Allah ﷻ accept this work and make it useful for those who truly desire to learn and practice Islam in their lives.

DR. MOHAMMAD SADIQ
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Ramadan 18, 1414H
March 1, 1994

REVISED TRANSLATION NOTE

All Praise be to Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ shower *ṣalāt* and *salām* on our Blessed Prophet ﷺ, on his family, and his Ṣaḥāba ﷺ.

In this revised edition of the book, several points were the focus of revision. The overall formatting needed to be updated according to modern standards. Although for the most part I used the same translation that was completed by our respected Dr. Sadiq, I translated those portions which were eliminated in the previous edition. The hadith and Quranic text in Arabic along with their meaning have also been corrected and additions have been made where necessary. Now, the book contains all the contents which are present in the original book. Punctuation and capitalization have been revised throughout the whole book to meet the changed rules of the language. These changes were reviewed and approved by the author of the original book, Dr. Muhammad Ismail Memon Madani.

May Allah ﷻ accept this work and make it a *ṣadaqa jāriya* for the author, his family and for all those who have contributed to this work.

S. AHMAD
Buffalo, New York, USA
Sha‘bān 1, 1431H
July 13, 2010



INTRODUCTION

MANY ISSUES are of the kind in which there never was any difference of opinion in the Umma. In fact, if anything, there is complete consensus on these issues. However, these are the days of ‘reform.’ ‘Freedom from old traditions’ seems to have become the motto. Attempts are being made to approve and accept as lawful everything that was forbidden in Islam. Many agreed upon matters are being presented as controversial. One such issue is that of hijab.¹ One hears claims from everywhere that there is no ruling in Islam about hijab. Some present inaccurate translations of the ayas in this regard while others bring forth deviant interpretations. Still, others outright reject the aḥādīth in this respect.

In Western countries, the philosophies and ideologies of non-Muslims are more readily available and prevalent than the teachings of Islam. The literature about Islam found in such countries is written mostly by non-Muslims or by westernized Muslims who have obtained degrees in Islamic education under the tutelage of non-Muslims. They therefore view the Qur’an and hadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ through colored glasses. As a result, they themselves go astray and lead others on the wrong path as well. In this way, doubts are being created about the commandments of hijab also.

1 Hijab literally means “screen”, “curtain”, “partition” and “concealment.” In the verb form, it means “to conceal oneself” or “hide from the view.” In the Shari’a, it means to cover, conceal or hide oneself from view of those men with whom marriage is or may become permissible.

Hijab, and all that it comprises, is an Islamic injunction and religious guidance based on the Holy Qur'an, the aḥādīth of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the opinions of the Islamic jurists, as well as the practice of our pious predecessors. For this reason, it has been an established practice in our Umma from the dawn of Islam. It is not an innovation that came about on its own and then evolved into a cultural practice and finally turned into an Islamic injunction within Muslim society. Such modifications cannot be expected in a divine constitution that is preserved [against change] and which is broad and inclusive [of every matter and issue]. But, for sometime now, the hijab issue has polarized Muslims in its practice and beliefs. Consequently, doubts have been raised in people's minds, which have led to questions about the legal status and the basic truth about hijab.

Under the influence of western civilization, the practice of women going out without hijab has resulted in reactionary and extreme points of views. This has caused further doubts about its principles and its legal limits. On the one hand, it is claimed that the legal limits of hijab are the product of the conservatism of traditional scholars. [Those who make such claims do not suffice with] choosing not to observe hijab for themselves, but actually use it as a way to promote the belief that bringing women out in the open is the need of the day in addition to it being a ruling of the Shari'a. On the other hand, [in other circles] it is considered heretical to even make mention of the flexibility of the Shari'a in the matter of hijab. This viewpoint has been stretched so far as to incorporate the traditional and cultural limits imposed on women as also being a part of the Shari'a.

It is, therefore, necessary to present the true teachings of the Qur'an and Sunna on this matter. May Allah ﷻ give us the true understanding of the Shari'a and the courage to practice it. In the end, I would like to thank my dear sons Muhammad Mansoor and Muhammad Ibrahim who truly proved to be my hands and arms in writing this book. I am also thankful to my dear friend, Maulana Muhammed Abd al-Muizz, who reviewed the transcript and suggested valuable changes which have made the book more beneficial and better organized. May Allah ﷻ enrich their knowledge and accept them in the service of His Dīn and bless them with success of this world and the Hereafter.

Introduction

Note: These days, the word hijab often translated in English as “heads-carf” is misleading, as it does not correspond with its meaning and purpose in the Qur’an and Sunna. The correct translation is “something that covers and conceals completely.”

DR. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL MEMON MADANI

Dhu al-Qa‘da 26, 1410H
June 20, 1990



Chapter 1

EVIDENCE FROM THE QUR'AN

THE RULES AND REGULATIONS which govern the social relations between men and women are the cornerstone of human society which, when violated, result in the destruction of an entire society. This may be readily witnessed in various time periods in the history of human civilization. Hence, Allah ﷻ provides clear boundaries on this topic in the Qur'an. In some aya, men and women have been asked to lower their gazes; in another aya, women are instructed not to speak softly when addressing men and still, in another aya, the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ were told to talk to women from behind a curtain if they needed anything.



THE AYA OF HIJAB

The scholars of Qur'an [*mufasssirūn*] agree that the commandment regarding hijab for women was revealed in the following aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, because of which this aya is often referred to as “the aya of hijab:”

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى طَعَامٍ غَيْرِ نَاظِرِينَ
إِنَاهُ وَلَكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا وَلَا مُسْتَسِينِينَ لِحَدِيثِ إِنَّ

ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذِي النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْخَرِي مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَإِذَا
 سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَاسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ
 وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُزْوَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَنْ تُنْكِحُوا أَرْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ
 كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمًا

*O you who believe, do not enter the houses of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, unless you are permitted for a meal, not [so early as] to wait for its preparation. But when you are invited, go inside. Then, once you have had the meal, just disperse, and [do] not [sit for long] being keen for a chat. This [conduct of yours] hurts the Prophet, but he feels shy of [telling] you [about it], but Allah ﷻ is not shy of the truth. And when you ask anything from them [the blessed wives of the Prophet], ask them from behind a curtain. That is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts. It is not allowed for you that you hurt Allah's ﷻ messenger, nor that you ever marry his wives after him. Indeed, it would be an enormity in the sight of Allah ﷻ.*¹

In the above aya, we find some rulings and commandments of the Islamic way of life pertaining to:

- a Invitations for meals and the conduct of guests
- b Hijab for women
- c Prohibition of marriage with the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ after his demise

Since (a) and (c) above are not related to our topic, I will only present the details of (b).

The hijab was mandated for women in this aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb as they were not required to observe hijab before the revelation of this aya.

The scholars of Qur'an are unanimous that the injunction in the above aya includes all women, though it specifically addresses the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. This same methodology is used

¹ 33:53

in many other places in the Qur'an. For example, Allah ﷻ says in Sūrat al-Ṭalāq:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ

O Prophet, when your people divorce women, divorce them at a time when the period of 'idda may start...²

Obviously, the injunction of observing 'idda,³ the prohibition of divorcing women during their menses and calculating the duration of 'idda is not specific to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and his wives, but includes every Muslim man and woman. Similarly, in the above aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, the injunction relates to all Muslim women, though it addresses the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The clearest proof of this [i.e. that this aya addresses all Muslim women] is the following portion of the aforementioned aya in which Allah ﷻ states the reason for the ruling of hijab:

ذَلِكُمْ أَطَهَرَ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ

...this is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts...⁴

This aya clarifies that immodesty [leaving the home without hijab] breeds evil and indecency in the hearts. Undoubtedly, the common Muslims are more in need of protecting themselves from this evil as they are much more liable to engage in such sinful acts.

It is also noteworthy that the people addressed in this aya are the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ whom Allah ﷻ purifies Himself. This is mentioned in the same sura in another place.

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

...Allah ﷻ only intends to keep [all sorts of] filth away from you,

2 65:1

3 Idda is the waiting period for a woman before she can remarry after being widowed or divorced.

4 33:53

*O members of the family [of the Prophet], and to make you pure through a perfect purification.*⁵

On the other hand, the men [addressed in the aya] were greater in status than the angels [i.e. the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ]. When the loftiest people of the early days of Islam were bound by the commandments of hijab, then those who succeed them are bound by it even more so as the transgressions, sinfulness, adultery and blind following of the desires will only increase as the Day of Judgment draws nearer. After all, who amongst us can claim to be more pure of heart than the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ and that our women are more pious than the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to say that intermingling between men and women will not lead to corruption amongst us?

Imam Ibn Kathīr writes:

Muslims were forbidden from entering the houses of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ the way they entered each other's homes without permission in the days of *Jāhiliyya* or in the nascent years of Islam. Allah ﷻ preferred modesty and honor for this Umma and commanded them to observe hijab. Undoubtedly, this commandment is in respect and honor of this Umma.⁶

‘Allāma Ibn al-‘Arabī writes in his exegesis [*tafsīr*]:

Although the three commandments in this aya—i.e; entering the house of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ after gaining permission; not engaging in idle talk after the meal; and observing hijab between men and the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ—were specifically revealed in regards to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and his wives, they are binding for all Muslims since we are required to follow the guidance and traditions of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Unless of course, if Allah ﷻ Himself specifies that a particular rule is meant only for the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and the Umma is not subjected to it, but that is not the case here.⁷

5 33:33

6 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

7 Aḥkām al-Qur’an

Imam al-Qurtubī writes:

This aya is proof that when it became necessary to ask anything from the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, including gaining religious instruction, it should be done from behind a curtain [hijab]. All Muslim women are bound by this order. Besides this aya, other principles of Islamic doctrine also explain to us that a woman [for her honor] deserves to be hidden, as well as her body and voice, as has been mentioned previously.⁸



CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE REVELATION OF THE ABOVE AYA

A number of congruous circumstances are narrated to be the cause for the revelation of the above aya. It is likely that all of the circumstances correspondingly resulted in this revelation. In the first ayas in which the etiquettes of invitation for a meal are mentioned, it was declared that no one should go to eat a meal without being invited first, and then they should wait until it is served. Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated from Sulaimān ibn Arqam that this aya was revealed regarding certain onerous people who showed up uninvited at mealtime and waited until the meal was served.

Imam 'Abd ibn Ḥumaid has narrated from Anas رضي الله عنه that these ayas were revealed to admonish those who went to the Blessed Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم house at mealtime. They sat talking amongst themselves until the meal was served and then partook of the food. The first two ayas were revealed for the instruction of such people. These incidents occurred before the revelation of the commandments of hijab when men and women mixed freely in each other's homes.

Imam Bukhārī relates two narrations regarding the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the second commandment about hijab.

One is narrated by Anas رضي الله عنه that 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه advised the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, You receive all kinds of people at your home, good and bad, it would be better if you ask your wives to observe hijab." Accordingly, this aya of hijab was revealed.

8 Tafsīr al-Qurtubī

In another hadith in both Bukhārī and Muslim, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said:

My Lord agreed with me in three matters. The first is that I requested our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the station of Ibrahim [maqām Ibrāhīm] be made a place of prayer. Thereafter, the following aya was revealed:

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى

...*Make from the Station of Ibrāhīm a place of prayer...*⁹

Secondly, I implored our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that, “It would be better if you asked your wives to cover themselves from men since both good and bad men come to speak to them,” after which the aya of hijab was revealed. When the wives of the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم became envious of each other, I told them that, “If the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم divorces all of you, it is not difficult for Allah تعالى to replace you with wives better than you.” Thereafter, an aya was revealed with the same wording.

In the second hadith of Bukhārī, Anas رضي الله عنه says:

I knew about the order of hijab more than any other person because I was present at the time of its revelation. When Zainab bint Jaḥsh رضي الله عنها entered the house with our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after they were married and he spent the night with her, our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arranged for food to be cooked and invited the people for *walīma*.¹⁰ After the meal, some people remained sitting and began talking with each other. According to the narration in Tirmidhī, our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was present with Zainab رضي الله عنها as she sat facing the wall out of modesty. The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was hurt by the behavior of these people and stood up to leave the house. When he returned, the people were still there. Seeing our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم return, the people realized their mistake and dispersed. I was present when our Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

9 2:125

10 A Sunna meal served by the bridegroom after spending the night with his wife.

entered the home; he recited the aya of hijab, which had been revealed just then.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ

O you who believe, do not enter the houses of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ...

After the revelation of this aya, Anas رضي الله عنه said, "I know the most about the aya of hijab as I was present at the time of its revelation."¹¹



COMMANDMENT FOR WOMEN TO STAY HOME

To protect the chastity of women and preserve the moral fiber of society, it is most important to minimize intermingling between men and women. The most effective way to ensure this is for women not to leave their homes unnecessarily. The grave outcome of frequent contact with *non-mahram*¹² men and excessive outings as manifested in the immorality of past and present societies is nothing to be ignored. This is why the Qur'an orders women to stay in their homes. Allah ﷻ says in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb:

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ
الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ
الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ
اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women, if you observe taqwā [righteousness]. So, do not be too soft in your speech, lest someone having disease in his heart should develop fancies

¹¹ Tirmidhī, *Sūrat al-Aḥzāb*

¹² Marriable men [i.e. those who do not fall under the category of *mahram* [unmarriable] men like the father, brother, grandfather, etc.

[about you]; and do speak with appropriate words. Remain in your homes, and do not display [your] beauty as it used to be displayed in the days of earlier ignorance; and establish ṣalāt, and pay zakat, and obey Allah ﷻ and His Messenger. Allah ﷻ only intends to keep [all sorts of] filth away from you, O members of the family [of the prophet], and to make you pure through a perfect purification.¹³

Two important commandments are made in the above ayas. First, women should not talk to *non-maḥram* men unnecessarily or in a soft and sweet tone. Instead, they should talk to them in a straightforward and dry manner so that those who have disease in their heart [bad intentions] do not misinterpret them or entertain bad thoughts about them.

Imam al-Qurṭubī writes:

Allah ﷻ has commanded Muslim women to talk in a straightforward and terse manner with *non-maḥram* men. The tone of their voice should be devoid of softness and sweetness unlike the promiscuous women of Jāḥiliyya who flirted with men or even those women today who possess bad moral character. Women should be wary while talking to strange men, even if they are members of her in-laws, and they should speak in a firm voice; however, the voice should not carry over to others.¹⁴

Mufti Muḥammad Shafi‘ writes:

Falā takhḍa‘na bi al-gaul (So, do not be too soft in your speech) means that even when it becomes necessary to talk to non-maḥram men from behind a curtain, a woman should avoid the pleasant and attractive tone of voice which is part of her nature. What this means is that she should not speak in a way that might charm or attract the listener. As Allah ﷻ says:

¹³ 32:32-33

¹⁴ Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

فَيَطْمَعُ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ

...lest someone having disease in his heart develop fancies
[about you]...¹⁵

'Disease' in this aya refers to partial or complete hypocrisy [*nifāq*]. A true hypocrite [*munāfiq*] is expected to behave in this manner but sometimes even a believer will incline towards *ḥarām* (prohibited) which is also one form of hypocrisy. A person who has true faith can never be inclined towards *ḥarām*.¹⁶

The main objective of the first part of this injunction is that women must acquire such a state of hijab and an avoidance of strange men that the weak of faith do not raise their hopes or expect anything from them. After this aya was revealed, some of the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ would muffle their mouths with their hands to hide their natural voice while talking to strangers. 'Amr ibn 'Āṣ ﷺ narrated from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ:

ان النبي صلي الله عليه وسلم نهى ان تكلم النساء الا باذن أزواجهن

Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ prohibited women from talking [to non-maḥram men] without the permission of their husbands.¹⁷

The second part of this injunction is that the best way for women to observe hijab is that they remain in their homes and not come out of them without a valid reason. Observing hijab in this manner is known as *ḥijāb bi al-buyūt* [observing hijab by staying in the four walls of the home].

Also deduced from the above aya is that the nature of women is that they can only attain contentment and peace by staying in their homes and by occupying themselves with domestic and family matters. The welfare and prosperity of society also depends on this. Unlike men, a woman's physical nature is not well suited for working outside

15 33:32

16 Tafsīr al-Mazhari

17 Aḥmad, 29/302 | Kanz al-'Ummāl, 16/391

the home to earn a living and to face all the severe hardships associated with it. This is why, in Islam, women do not bear the burden of earning a living. Her parents and brothers must fulfill her needs until she is married [after which the responsibility is passed on to the husband]. This rule indicates how much Islam emphasizes the importance of women remaining in the homes.

Another part of this aya [...and do not display (your) beauty as it used to be displayed in the days of earlier ignorance...] explains how women roamed about shamelessly in pre-Islamic times. Therefore, the earlier interpreters of the Qur'an interpreted these ayas in light of the ways and culture of the people in the times of Jāhiliyya. When one reads such interpretations against our times, it seems as if the people of our times are more ignorant than the people from the time of Jāhiliyya.

Mujāhid and Qatāda say that the word *tabarruj* in this aya means “walking flirtatiously.”

Muqātil says that *tabarruj* is when a woman only covers her head with her scarf without covering the neck and cleavage.

Mubarrad says that *tabarruj* is when a woman reveals the beauty of her physical body, which she is required to cover.

Laith says *tabarruj* is when a woman does not hide the beauty of her face and contours of her body and is inclined to reveal it.

Abū 'Ubaida says *tabarruj* is when a woman exhibits her beauty and her body in a way as to cause sexual excitement in men.¹⁸

'Allāma Ibn Jauzī, after quoting the above opinions, writes:

I believe that a woman's leaving her home and wandering on the streets is the biggest *fitna*,¹⁹ let alone exhibiting her beauty and her body which is simply adding fuel to the fire.²⁰

All of the above points explained by the earlier interpreters under the definition of *tabarruj* are prevalent today. Most Muslim women today have gone far beyond that. This is despite the fact that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

18 Rūḥ al-Ma'āni

19 Fitna has various meanings: trial, tribulation, corruption, and punishment.

20 Aḥkām al-Nisā

شر نساءكم المتبرجات المتخيلات وهن المناقات لا يدخل الجنة منهن
الامثل الغراب الأعصم

The worse of your women are those who leave their homes freely without covering themselves. They are Muslim in name only [hypocrites] and leaving aside only a handful, none will enter Paradise, just as only a few crows are ever caged.²¹

It was this tabarruj which predominated in the times of Jāhiliyya. In order to eliminate tabarruj, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked women who took bai'a with him not to practice tabarruj.²²

The use of tabarruj in the above aya also clarifies that a woman must hide her beauty if she must leave the house. This can be achieved by wearing an 'abāya or jilbāb²³ which covers the entire body. This will be discussed in later chapters.

Women's rights advocates often object that this aya addresses the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ who are its main subject; therefore, the injunctions must be restricted to them and cannot include other women.

In fact, if one reads the whole aya, it is clear that none of the five injunctions in this aya are restricted to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ since the ayas before and after the aya of hijab relate to all Muslim women. In this aya, the first commandment is about the rule of speaking with a non-maḥram; the second is about women staying in their homes, establishing their ṣalāt, paying the zakat, and then finally, obeying Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ. Who can say that the commandments related to ṣalāt, zakat and obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ are restricted to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ only?

The truth is that these injunctions include all Muslim women, though it addressed the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ first. In many places in the Qur'an, we find that an aya addresses a specific person but

21 al-Sunan al-Kubrā, *Istihbāb al-Tazawwuj bi al-Wadūd*

22 al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, 11/264

23 'Abāya is a coverall worn by Muslim women that drapes over their garments. Jilbāb is the outer sheet or shawl used by women to wrap around the body over the garments for the same purpose.

the ensuing commandment applies to the whole Umma. Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ writes:

This aya provides a clear argument that women are required to stay in their homes and that it is forbidden for them to leave them [without necessity].... And all the rules in this aya are those which were taught to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to safeguard their chastity. And all Muslim women are required to follow these commandments.²⁴

Imam Ibn Kathīr writes:

These are those rules which Allah ﷻ taught the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and as all women of the Muslim Umma are required to follow their example, these commandments are applicable to all Muslim women.²⁵

In addition, the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ held such a high status that Allah ﷻ acknowledges their purity and chastity in an entire segment of Qur'an. He says:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

... Allah ﷻ only intends to keep [all sorts of] filth away from you, O members of the family [of the prophet], and to make you pure through a perfect purification.²⁶

This aya is also called “the aya of purification.” The Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a [People of the Sunna and Majority of Scholars] believe that this aya was revealed about the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ and the family of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, more specifically the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. *Purification* in this aya means discipline and refinement of the self and purification of the heart. This highest and most coveted status is only

24 Aḥkām al-Qur'an

25 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

26 33:33

achieved by the chosen friends of Allah ﷺ [*auliyā Allāh*] after which they are safeguarded against sins though they are not innocent like the prophets. All those who stayed in the company of our Blessed Prophet ﷺ achieved this lofty status through the blessings of his company. The Muslims who came after his time also achieved this status by sitting in the company of the pious ones and attaining according to their aptitude and [inner] capabilities.

Now, when Allah ﷻ purifies someone, is there any chance of their becoming impure? How can one even perceive the possibility that they spoke to strangers regarding matters of faith in a soft tone? But the question is that if it is not possible, then why did Allah ﷻ even prohibit them from doing so in the first place?

The answer is that by this command, the wives of our Blessed Prophet ﷺ are being made aware of the natural attraction in a woman's voice and that they must make a conscious effort to change it with curtness. If it becomes necessary to speak to non-maḥrams then they should hide the softness in their voice and change their tone of voice.

The following points are noteworthy here:

- 1 The wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ claim the highest status among all women and none can imagine them committing sins. They were the purified ones because the one who purified them was Allah ﷻ Himself. No one could even pass the thought of them committing [lustful] sins.
- 2 The wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ are mothers of the Umma as proclaimed by Allah ﷻ when He says, *wa az-wājuhū ummahātuhum* (and his wives are their mothers).²⁷
- 3 They were not conferred the status [of being mothers of the believers] only out of respect for them, but also to inform the men that they were permanently forbidden from marrying them as with biological mothers. Allah ﷻ said:

وَلَا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا أَزْوَاجَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمًا

i.e. you may never marry the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ after his death. As we are prohibited from marrying our mother; likewise, it is forbidden for any

believer to marry any of the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ after his death.

- 4 Who were the people who came to ask questions about the Dīn from the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ? The Ṣaḥāba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ who had attained the highest level of *taqwā*, whom the angels envied and whom Allah ﷻ Himself praised in the Qur'an by saying:

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

*...Allah ﷻ is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him...*²⁸

In another aya, He says:

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ الْحُسَيْنِيَّ

*...though Allah ﷻ has promised the good [reward] for each...*²⁹

- 5 What type of conversations took place between the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and the Ṣaḥāba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ? It was nothing more than knowledge of Dīn.

Now consider the women. Who were they? They were the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ whom Allah ﷻ purified; who are chosen as the mothers of the Umma, and; who were permanently forbidden upon every male of the Umma. Who were the men? They were the venerated Ṣaḥāba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. What were the discussions? Matters of faith. Regarding such situations, Allah ﷻ says that the soft feminine tone should be covered by speaking in a stern voice. This was the special instructions given to the wives of Blessed Prophet ﷺ. On the other hand, the Ṣaḥāba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were ordered,

28 98:8

29 57:10

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ فَاَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ

...And when you ask anything from them [the blessed wives of the Prophet], ask them from behind a curtain...³⁰

i.e. if they needed to speak to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, they should speak from behind a curtain and not in front of them.

At this moment consider who is being commanded. Who were the men? Who were the women? What were they being ordered to do? What necessity warranted this? If these highly venerated and blessed people are ordered to observe these commands, then we can understand its importance for us in our times.



'ABAYA OR JILBĀB

In the last aya, Muslim women are asked not to leave their homes without necessity. And if they must, they should not leave without the hijab like the women in the days of Jāhiliyya did. Furthermore, in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, Allah ﷻ clearly orders them to wear a *jilbāb* when leaving their homes:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزُوجَكِ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ
ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

*O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them. That will make it more likely that they are recognized, hence not teased. And Allah ﷻ is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful.*³¹

This aya is the most important of all the ayas on hijab as it clearly states the face being included in the meaning of hijab. Therefore, the

³⁰ 33:54

³¹ 33:59

scholars of Qur'an discuss covering of the face at great length based on this aya.

In addition, this aya is not addressed to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ or his daughters alone, but includes all women. Thus, no one can raise the argument that this aya is meant for specific women only and is not general in its purport.

Before discussing this aya any further, it is important to understand the literal meaning of the words *jilbāb* (shawls) and *yudnīna 'alaihinna* (should draw down their shawls over them) in the aya.



WHAT IS A JILBĀB?

Jalābīb is the plural of *jilbāb*. The scholars have a difference of opinion in the meaning of *jilbāb*. 'Allāma Ibn Manẓūr writes:

Jilbāb is the outer sheet or coverlet, which is bigger than a shawl but smaller than a large sheet, used by women to hide their head and chest. It has also been said that *jilbāb* is a big wide cloth that is smaller than a *milḥafa* which is worn by women. Some say that *milḥafa* is the same as *jilbāb*.³²

He further analyzes the word *milḥafa* and writes:

It is the name given to the shawl that is used in the winter and is thrown over all the clothing [and which completely covers the clothes] like a quilt [that once a person drapes himself with it, he is protected from the cold]. Therefore, everything you use to wrap yourself with is called *liḥāf*.

Regarding the word *jilbāb*, the respected 'Allāma continues:

It is said that *jilbāb* is in fact the sheet worn by women to hide themselves from head to toe like a *milḥafa*. It has also been said

32 Lisān al-'Arab

that jilbāb is the sheet worn by women which, when enwrapped, covers her completely.³³

‘Allāma Ibn Manzūr explains that the essential meaning of *jilb* and jilbāb is “to cover” and, more specifically, the etymological meaning of the root word [*jilb*] is “to hide.” He also presents two ayas in evidence of this point.

One poet says:

والعيش داج كفا جلبابة

Life is like the dark night which is hidden by a sheet of difficulties.

Another poet says:

مجلب من سواد الليل جلبابا

He has hidden himself with the darkness of night.

The respected ‘Allāma quotes ‘Alī عليه السلام who implies the same meaning:

من احبنا اهل البيت فليعد للفقر جلبابا

The person who loves us, the family of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, should be prepared to live his life covered with a shawl of worries.³⁴

‘Allāma Ibn Manzūr then writes:

Ibn al-‘Arabī said that the meaning of jilbāb is *izār*. Abū ‘Ubaid quotes Imam al-Zuhrī as saying that when Ibn al-‘Arabī interpreted jilbāb as *izār*, he did not mean by it the sheet that is worn to cover the lower part of the body but the sheet, which when wrapped properly, will completely hide the one who wears it.

33 Lisān al-‘Arab

34 Lisān al-‘Arab | al-Nihāya [by Ibn al-Athīr]

Similarly, *izār al-lail* is the sheet which is worn when sleeping to cover oneself and which hides the body completely.³⁵

He further writes:

‘Allāma Ibn al-Athīr interprets *jilbāb* as *miqnaʿ* which is the cloth women wear to cover their head, back and chest.³⁶

In his own Lexicon, ‘Allāma ibn Manzūr defines *miqnaʿ* as:

Qinaʿ or *miqnaʿ* is the cloth which a woman wears to hide her head and her beauty. Hence, it is said:

أَلْقَتْ عَنْ وَجْهِهَا قِنَاعَ الْحَيَاءِ

She has lifted and thrown the sheet of modesty from her face.³⁷

The above explanation can be summarized as follows:

- 1 The root word *jilb* or *jilbāb* describes the object which completely covers something; for example, the blanket used in the winter or the darkness of night that envelops everything.
- 2 The word *jilbāb* specifically refers to the sheet worn by women to protect themselves from being seen by strangers.
- 3 The lexicon makes it abundantly clear that the sheet which is known as “*jilbāb*” is the same sheet which is used by women to completely cover their body, especially their head, face, back, chest, etc.

After the etymological meaning, we now cite the opinions of [some of] the scholars. ‘Allāma Ālūsī writes:

35 Lisān al-‘Arab

36 Ibid

37 Ibid

According to Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, jilbāb is the sheet which women cover themselves with from head to toe [to avoid being seen by strangers]. Ibn Jubair explains jilbāb as being *miqna'*.³⁸

'Allāma Ālūsī then quotes the opinions of different scholars on the meaning of jilbāb as narrated above. 'Allāma Ibn Ḥazam writes:

In the Arabic language, the language of the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, jilbāb is the outer sheet which covers the entire body. A piece of cloth which is small and cannot cover the entire body cannot be called a jilbāb.³⁹

The second part of the aya is *yudnīna 'alaihinna* (*should draw down their shawls over them*). 'Allāma Ālūsī writes:

The literal meaning of '*adnā*' is to bring something nearer, though here it means "to drop or drape something" since it is followed by [the prepositional] '*alā*', thus converting it into a transitive verb. In my opinion, the combination of these two words points to the fact that the true objective [of hijab] is for women to hide themselves in such a way that they are able to see their path as they are walking.⁴⁰

Imam Abū Ḥayyān quotes the famous linguist Imam Kasā'ī that the meaning of *yudnīna 'alaihinna* is:

يَتَّعْنَ بِمَلْحَفِهِنَّ مَنْصُومَةً عَلَيْهِنَّ

Women should cover themselves fully with the sheet and wrap the sheet around themselves completely.

Commenting on the words of Imam Kasā'ī, Imam Abū Ḥayyān writes:

38 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī

39 Al-Muḥallā

40 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī

The meaning of the word *inzimām*, used by Imam Kasā'ī, is the same as *adnā* which means to drape the sheet and then wrap it well.

In his explanation of *yudnīna*, 'Allāma Zamakhsharī writes:

It means that women should cover their face with a sheet. Hence, when the veil falls from the face, the Arabs say:

أُذِنِي ثُوبِكِ عَلَيَّ وَجْهِي

Hide your face with a veil

Sa'īd ibn Jubair explained *yudnīna* '*alaihinna* in the same way.

After narrating the opinions of 'Allāma Zamakhsharī and Abū Ḥayyān, 'Allāma Alūsī writes:

In my opinion, the above discussion explains the inferred meaning; otherwise, the explicit meaning of '*alaihinna*' is to cover one's body completely with the sheet.

However, in their interpretations some have only included the head and the face and ignored the entire body because it was the face that was usually left uncovered in the days of Jāhiliyya.⁴¹



HOW SHOULD THE JILBĀB BE WRAPPED?

In addition to laying out the ruling of hijab as being mandatory and the face being included in the meaning of hijab, the venerable scholars of Qur'an also delineated the method of how the jilbāb will be worn. Qāḍī Shaukānī writes:

In the interpretation of this aya, 'Allāma Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawai has narrated from Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه that

41 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī

Allah has ordered Muslim women to cover their heads and hide their faces when they leave their home out of necessity and that they may only keep one eye uncovered.⁴²

The greatest scholar of Qur'an, Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, mentions two ways of wearing jilbāb. According to one method, the woman can leave one eye uncovered whereas in the second method, both eyes can be left uncovered without any objections. We learned about the first method through the above reference while the second method is reported by 'Allāma Ālūsī as follows:

'Allāma Ibn Jarīr and Ibn al-Mundhir described the method of wearing the sheet from Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه and Qatāda. They explain that the way to wear it is that first the woman will wrap the sheet from the top covering her forehead, then bring one side of the sheet to cover the face below the eyes including her nose. This method allows both eyes to be uncovered [which is acceptable under necessity] but it should be wrapped in such a manner that most of the face and upper body is covered.⁴³

Imam Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, a famous *tābi'ī* [first successor after the Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم], reports the following method of wrapping the sheet. He says:

When I asked 'Ubaida ibn Sufyān ibn Ḥārith al-Ḥaḍramī the method, he actually demonstrated it with his own shawl. First, he covered his head including his forehead in such a way that it covered his eyebrows. Then with the same sheet he covered the remaining part of his face in a way that only his right eye was left uncovered.⁴⁴

After relating the above quote, 'Allāma Ibn Jarīr writes that all the narrators [Ibn 'Aliyya from Ibn A'wan from Muḥammad from 'Ubaida] who narrated on the authority of 'Ubaida demonstrated

42 Fath al-Qadir

43 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī

44 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī | Aḥkām al-Qur'an | Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

the method of wrapping the sheet to their students as [their teacher] ‘Ubaida had demonstrated to them. Along with ‘Ubaida, Imam al-Qurṭubī attributes the same method to Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه. Quoting the meaning of this aya from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and Mujāhid, Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ writes:

When leaving their home, women should not have their head and face uncovered like the slave women but should instead cover their head and forehead.⁴⁵

Imam Suddī relates the following method of wearing the jilbāb:

Women should wrap the sheet in a way that it hides the whole face including the forehead and one eye [the other eye may be left uncovered if necessary].⁴⁶

In his explanation of the aya, Imam Wāḥidī writes:

Women will wrap the sheet in such a manner that they will completely cover their head and face leaving only one eye uncovered.⁴⁷

‘Allāma Ibn Sa‘d narrates from Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quraṣī:

Women should wrap the sheet so that it covers the face completely leaving only one eye uncovered.⁴⁸

After narrating this point, Imam Abū Ḥayyān writes:

It is our custom in Andalusia that when women leave the house, they leave only one eye exposed while the remaining face is completely covered.

45 Aḥkām al-Qur’an

46 Rūḥ al-Ma‘ānī | al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ

47 Faṭḥ al-Qadīr

48 Ibid

Besides the aforementioned scholars, all the *mufasssirūn* from the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to the present day, explain this aya in the same manner. They agree that women are required to cover themselves when coming out of their homes and that hiding of the face is included in the hijab. To quote every one of these scholars would make this book drawn-out; however, it is worthwhile to quote a few renowned scholars. Imam Ibn Jarīr writes:

In this aya, Allah ﷻ is ordering the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to ask his wives, his daughters, and all Muslim women not to dress like slave women leaving their heads and faces uncovered when coming out of their homes [out of necessity]. Instead, they should cover themselves with a cloak that covers their faces in order that no one stands in their way and everyone knows that they are upright citizens.⁴⁹

Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ writes:

This aya is evidence that young women must cover their faces in front of strangers and that they should cover and be modest so that ill-natured people do not entertain bad thoughts about them.⁵⁰

Imam ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Kiyāharās writes:

Jilbāb is used to describe a big sheet. In this aya, Allah ﷻ orders Muslim women to cover their head and faces [when leaving their homes].⁵¹

‘Allāma al-Naishābūrī writes:

In the early days of Islam, all women came out dressed in knee-length shirts and scarves as was the custom in the days of

49 Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr

50 Aḥkām al-Qur’an

51 Ibid

Jāhiliyya. There was no difference in the dresses of street women and the women from respectable families. Then Allah ﷻ commanded [Muslim women] to cover their heads and faces with sheets so that people would differentiate them from street women.⁵²

Imam al-Rāzī writes:

Women from respectable families and slave women came out of their homes without any hesitation and the immoral people would follow them in the days of Jāhiliyya. In this aya, Allah ﷻ ordered the honorable women to cover themselves with a sheet so that they could be recognized [as respectable women]. There are two ways to be recognized. Firstly, by their dress which exhibits their modesty. Secondly, no one will expect a woman who covers her face, though it is not part of her *satr*⁵³ and therefore is not obligatory to hide, to agree to uncover any other part of her *satr*. Additionally, this dress will affirm her being a modest and veiled woman who cannot be corrupt.⁵⁴

Qāḍī al-Baiḍāwī writes:

When Muslim women leave their home out of necessity, they should hide their faces and bodies with a sheet. Here the word *min* (*from*) is used for *tab'īḍ* (partiality) which means to use one part of the sheet to cover the face and the other to wrap around the body.⁵⁵

Imam Ibn Kathīr writes:

In this aya, Allah ﷻ is ordering the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to inform the Muslim women in general, and his wives and daughters more

52 Gharā'ib al-Qur'an

53 Portion of the body required by the Shari'a to be covered and which cannot be exposed in front of others.

54 Tafsīr al-Kabīr

55 Tafsīr al-Baiḍāwī

specifically, due to their high status, to use sheets to cover their faces when leaving their home. This will distinguish them from the women of the days of Jāhiliyya.⁵⁶

Imam al-Suyūṭī writes:

This aya is proof that all Muslim women must cover; hence, it is mandatory to hide the face and head as part of the covering.⁵⁷

The author of *Jāmi' al-Bayān* writes:

Jilbāb is the sheet which is used on top of the scarf and completely covers the woman from head to toe; hence, it is mandatory for Muslim women to wear a sheet to veil themselves and cover the entire body and face with it.⁵⁸

Imam Abū Ḥayyān states:

The advantage in observing hijab is that such women are recognized as pious and respectable. Thus, perverts will not trail after them and such women will not have to suffer improprieties. Nobody will dare follow and make advances towards a woman who has completely concealed herself. On the contrary, if one comes out adorned and without hijab, the malicious and evil-minded people will have high hopes of such women.⁵⁹

Imam al-Qurṭubī writes:

During the days of Jāhiliyya, women behaved vulgarly and they came out with their faces uncovered, attracting men's attentions and they became the object of their mental debauchery. Thus, in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ ordered the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to

56 Tafsīr Ibn al-Kathīr

57 'Aun al-Ma'būd, *fī Qaul Illāh Yudnina 'alaihinna min*

58 Ibid

59 al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ

instruct the Muslim women to veil their faces when they leave their homes [out of necessity].⁶⁰

‘Allāma Ibn al-Jauzī writes:

According to Imam Ibn Qutaiba, the meaning of this aya is that Muslim women must cover themselves with big sheets. According to other scholars, the aya means that sheets should be worn to cover the face and head so that anyone who saw them would know that they are respectable free women [not slave women].⁶¹

Imam Abū al-Sa‘ūd states:

The meaning of the aya is that when women leave their home out of necessity, they should cover their face and body with a sheet.⁶²

Imam al-Nasafī writes:

Imam Mubarrad said that the meaning of *yudnīna ‘alaihinna* is that women should veil themselves and cover their faces and bodies with a sheet because when the veil is removed from the face of a woman, the Arabs say:

أدني ثوبك على وجهك

Hide your face with your sheet

The word *min* in the aya is for *tab‘īd* meaning that part of the sheet should be worn to hide the body while the other part to cover the face so that they can be differentiated from the slave women.

60 Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

61 Zād al-Masīr

62 Tafsīr Abū Sa‘ūd

The conclusion is that in this aya Muslim women have been ordered to cover their face and head so that lustful people do not become hopeful.⁶³

‘Allāma al-Jaml writes:

The aya means that women should cover their faces and bodies so that they can be differentiated from slave women and singers.⁶⁴

These quotations are taken from some of the renowned mufassirūn. Otherwise, almost all the mufassirūn explain this aya to include hiding of the face in the meaning of hijab. It is also noteworthy that among these scholars are followers of every one of the four schools of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Thus, all the Ḥanafī, Shafī‘ī, Hanbalī and Mālikī schools agree that veiling the face is a part of the hijab.

And [remember that] this is not a theoretical discussion. The aḥādīth clearly state that all women, including the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, implemented this ruling immediately after the revelation of this aya and the use of jilbāb and hijab by women quickly became the norm of Muslim society. Actually, it was exemplary how readily the Muslim women obeyed and practiced it. Imam ‘Abd al-Razzāq narrated from Umm Salama ﷺ:

عن أم سلمة قالت لما نزلت هذه الآية يدنين عليهن من جلابيبهن خرج
نساء الأنصار كأن على رؤوسهن الغربان من الأكسية

After revelation of the aya, *yudnīna ‘alaihinna min jalābībihinna*, the ladies of Anṣār came out of their homes with cloaks [so it appeared] as if crows were on their heads [i.e. the black cloaks draped them completely].⁶⁵

63 Madārik al-Tanzil

64 Tafsīr Āyāt al-Aḥkām

65 Rūḥ al-Ma‘ānī

Further details will be presented regarding this subject in the following chapters. It should be noted here that the modern day *'abāya* [which Muslim women wear in certain countries] also serves as a *jilbāb*. It is this hijab, which was established amongst the women from the onset of Islam, that is now being questioned by westernized Muslims. To accomplish this, they interpret the Qur'an and *aḥādīth* according to their own desires, thereby going astray and leading others on the same path. May Allah ﷻ guide all of us and protect us from the *fitan*.



THE COMMANDMENT FOR PROTECTING THE GAZE AND HIDING THE ADORNMENT

Not only did Islam order women to stay home, to avoid talking flirtatiously to non-*maḥram* men, and to cover themselves with cloaks, it also closed all the doors from where the carnal desires incite humans towards evil. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَ
لَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءَ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانَهُنَّ أَوْ نِسَاءَهُنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوْ
التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ
النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

Tell the believing men that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts; it is more decent for them. Surely Allah ﷻ is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts, and must

not expose their adornment, except that which appears thereof, and must wrap their bosoms with their shawls, and must not expose their adornment, except to their husbands or their fathers or the fathers of their husbands, or to their sons or the sons of their husbands, or to their brothers or the sons of their brothers or the sons of their sisters, or to their women, or to those owned by their right hands, or male attendants having no [sexual] urge, or to the children who are not yet conscious of the shames of women. And let them not stamp their feet in a way that the adornment they conceal is known. And repent to Allah ﷻ O Believers, all of you, so that you may achieve success.⁶⁶

Before covering the details of the injunctions in the above two ayas, it will be useful to know that the first aya is the same aya raised in the beginning of this chapter [33:53] which was revealed at the time of the marriage of Zainab bint Jaḥsh ﷻ to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Scholars believe that this aya was revealed in the 3rd or 5th year of Hijra. Imam Ibn Kathīr and 'Allāma Shaukānī are of the opinion that it was the 5th year of Hijra. In Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī, 'Allāma Ālūsī narrates from Anas ﷺ that the marriage took place in the month of Dhu al-Qa'da in the 5th year of Hijra, and the scholars are unanimous that the first aya of hijab was revealed on this occasion.

The above two ayas of Sūrat al-Nūr were revealed at the time of the incident of *Ifk* which occurred after the Blessed Prophet ﷺ returned from the battle of Banī al-Muṣṭalaq. The fact that this battle took place in the 6th year of Hijra indicates to us that the above two ayas were revealed after the ayas of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb. Thus, the first commandments on hijab came and were implemented upon revelation of the ayas from Sūrat al-Aḥzāb.

The above ayas [from Sūrat al-Nūr] further contain the following commandments:

a Lowering the Eyes [*Ghaḍḍ al-Baṣr*]

The word *yaghuddū* (*lowering*) in the above ayas derives from the root word *ghaḍḍ* which means to lower, to regulate, to suppress.⁶⁷ To lower the eyes in this context means to turn away the eyes

66 24:30-31

67 Mufradāt al-Qur'an

from everything that is forbidden.⁶⁸ This includes gazing at a woman with bad intentions [which is *ḥarām*], gazing at a woman without any intention at all [which is *makrūh*], and also looking at the satr of any man or woman. However, necessities such as medical treatment are exempt from this ruling. Similarly, looking into people's homes and to gaze at all things forbidden in the Dīn also fall under this injunction.

b Guarding the Modesty [*Private Parts*]

Guarding the modesty implies avoiding all the forbidden means by which sexual desires are fulfilled. This includes: adultery, rape, masturbation, homosexuality, lesbianism, etc.

With a little thought [to the meaning of this aya], it becomes abundantly clear that the focus of these ayas is to stop men/women from all the forbidden means of satisfying sexual desires. The first and last injunction as pointed out above [i.e., looking at others with bad intentions and guarding the private parts], and everything in between these two injunctions are implicitly included in this commandment. It is true that the sexual desires and sexual misconduct begin with gazing at the opposite sex, which potentially leads to other more serious evils such as adultery and rape. In between these extremes are sexual fantasies, lewd talk, touching, fondling, etc. Imam Ibn Kathīr quotes 'Ubaida:

كل ما عصي الله به فهو كبيرة وقد ذكر الطرفين

Everything which is in disobedience of Allah ﷻ is a major sin. In this aya, both ends of this sin are mentioned.⁶⁹

c Concealing the Beauty and Jewelry

What does the word *zīnat* (beauty) mean? Shaikh Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhelwī writes:

Zīnat means beautification, whether it be natural such as the face, hands and body, or artificial such as clothes,

68 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

69 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

jewelry and make-up. All of these form the outward beauty of a woman and are included in the meaning of *illā mā zahara minhā* [except that which appears thereof]. All of these things, therefore, should be concealed from everyone except the *mahārim*⁷⁰ [i.e. those who are exempted in the aforementioned aya] who are mentioned in the next aya. The injunctions in this aya are mainly related to women's *satr*, i.e., an elucidation of what parts of a woman's body and her beauty must be concealed from others. In the next aya, twelve types of relations of a woman are mentioned in front of whom she is not required to observe these restrictions.⁷¹

Mufti Muḥammad Shafi' writes:

In the beginning of this aya, women were asked not to reveal their beauty. In this part of the aya, they have been asked to conceal their natural beauty as well by covering it with their scarves. The purpose here was also to eradicate the custom prevalent in the days of Jāhiliyya whereby women wore the scarves on their heads with the sides hanging on the back. This left their ears, neck, collar and chest exposed. Therefore, Muslim women were asked not to wear their scarves in this manner but to wrap the two sides of it closely on top of one another in the front so as to cover their chests and all the other parts of the body also.

In the next part of the aya, the men with whom hijab is not required are mentioned. There are two reasons for the exception of these specific men.

First, there is no danger of any evil from these men as they are *mahārim*. By nature, they are the protectors of their women's honor. Second, they live with these women in the same house which also dictates that they be exempted from these restrictions. It is also important to remember that with the exception of the husband, the *satr* must be observed with the rest of these

70 *Mahārim* [is the plural of *mahram*]—men with whom marriage is impermissible, e.g. father, brother, uncle, etc.

71 Ma'ārif al-Qur'an

maḥārim men. Exposing of satr, which is not permissible even in salāt, is forbidden with the maḥārim also.

Eight maḥārim and four other types of men are exempted in this aya from the commandment of hijab. Seven of these maḥārim were mentioned previously in the aya of hijab in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb. Five exceptions are added in this aya.

It should also be kept in mind that the word maḥram is being used in a general sense which includes the husband. The definition of maḥram by the scholars, which means “a man with whom marriage is forbidden,” is not meant here.

Husband: A wife is not required to observe hijab of any part of her body with her husband. However, to look at the private parts unnecessarily is undesirable. ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها narrated that neither she nor the Blessed Prophet ﷺ ever looked at each others’ private parts.

Father: The grandfather and great-grandfather are also included in this category.

Father-in-Law: The grandfather-in-law and great grandfather-in-law are also included in this category.

Sons: The biological sons.

Stepsons

Biological brothers and stepbrothers: However, male cousins, who are all non-maḥram, are not included in this category.

Sons of the biological brothers or stepbrothers

Sons of biological sisters and stepsisters: Female cousins are not included in this category.

The aforementioned list are the eight kinds of maḥārim.

Women: *nisā’ihinna* (*their women*) refers to the Muslim women with whom hijab is not required. However, the satr cannot be exposed in front of them except due to medical reasons.

In the above discussion, the stipulation of Muslim women clarifies that observing hijab from non-Muslim women is obligatory and that they fall under the same category as non-maḥram men. In explanation of this hadith, Imam Ibn Kathīr narrates

from Mujāhid that it is clear that it is not permissible for Muslim women to uncover their body in front of a non-Muslim woman. However, the jurists have a difference of opinion given that there are authentic aḥādīth about non-Muslim women coming to the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Some jurists say that the ruling of non-Muslim women and non-maḥram men is the same while others believe that it is the same for all women [Muslim or non-Muslim]; therefore, hijab does not have to be observed from non-Muslim women. Imam al-Rāzī states:

The reality is that *nisā'ihinna* [*their women*] includes all women, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The narration from preceding scholars concerning hijab from non-Muslim women is based on it being a preferred practice.

In Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī, the jurist of Baghdad 'Allāma Ālūsī writes of the hadith [which differentiates between Muslim and non-Muslim women]:

The above ruling is suitable for the people at this time since it has become nearly impossible for Muslim women to observe hijab from non-Muslim women.

Female attendants or servants: According to the majority of scholars, male servants are not included in this category. Hijab must be observed with male servants as with other non-maḥram men. Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab writes:

لا يغرنكم آية النور فإنه في الإناث دون الذكور

Let not the aya of Sūrat al-Nūr deceive you; it is about females and not males [i.e. servants].

'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ibn Sīrīn say that a male servant is prohibited from seeing the hair of his female master.⁷²

72 Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī

But the question remains that if *au mā malakat aimānuhunna* [those owned by their right hands] refers to female slaves only then why mention them again separately when they are already mentioned previously in *nisā'ihinna* [their women]? Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ responds that the apparent meaning of *nisā'ihinna* [their women] refers to Muslim women while the words *au mā malakat aimānuhunna* [those owned by their right hands] are explicitly added to include non-Muslim slave women.

Men who have no interest or desire for women:

أَوِ التَّائِبِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ

or male attendants having no [sexual] urge.

Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه explains that this part of the aya refers to the men who due to their mental or physical condition, have no interest or desire left in the opposite sex.⁷³

Ibn Jarīr narrates the same explanation from Abū 'Abd Allāh, Ibn Jubair and Ibn Aṭṭia. They are the men who are not sexually attracted to women, do not care for their beauty or what is happening in their lives, and do not speak to others about them. On the other hand, it is necessary [*wājib*] to observe hijab in the presence of hermaphrodites because of their attraction for women. 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها narrates that a hermaphrodite visited the wives of the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Thinking he was in the category of *male attendants having no (sexual) urges*, they came in his presence. When the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw and heard him, he forbid him from entering the home.⁷⁴ This is why Ibn Ḥajr Makkī says in *Sharḥ al-Minhāj* that:

Even if a man is impotent, eunuch or very old, they are not included in the abovementioned category and therefore it is necessary to observe hijab from all of them.

73 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

74 Rūḥ al-Ma'āni

The words *ghairi uli al-irbati* [having so sexual urge] with *al-tābi'in* [male attendants] refers to deranged men and the hangers-on amongst them who entered homes to get something to eat; women do not have to observe hijab from them. The reason they are mentioned in the aya is because such people existed at that time who entered homes only to get something to eat. They are excused in the aya due to their mental condition and not because of their dependence on food.

Prepubescent children: *awi al-ṭifl alladhīna* [or to the children who are not yet aware of the shames of the women] refers to children who have not reached the age of puberty and neither have they developed any interest for women or to know about sexual matters. The boy who has such awareness and interest is approaching the age of puberty and it is thus necessary to observe hijab from him.⁷⁵

Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ writes:

Here, *ṭifl* refers to those children who cannot differentiate the special relationship between men and women [related from Mujāhid].

d Concealing the Voice

After lowering the gaze, guarding the modesty, concealing the beauty, and [the categories of] the maḥārim, the fourth important issue raised in this aya is the voice of women. [In this part of the aya] women are asked not to walk with a heavy foot so as to draw attention of men through the sounds of their jewelry.

The first part of the aya forbade women from showing their beauty to non-maḥram men while the last part reaffirms this point since covering of the head and chest was mandatory for [women from before], and now [in this part of the aya] women are instructed to guard themselves against all the different ways in which her hidden beauty can be exposed. According to this aya, any such jingles hanging from the jewelry, or to wear jewelry one on top of the other so as to produce a jingle, or to walk in a

75 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr

way so as to cause clinking of the jewelry, which may be heard by non-maḥram, men are all forbidden.

From this aya, many jurists have inferred that if it is forbidden for a woman to let non-maḥram men hear the sound made by pieces of the jewelry [she is wearing], then it is certainly forbidden for non-maḥram men to hear the woman's voice. This is why they included the voice of a woman in the definition of *satr*. It is written in *Nawāzil*:

Women should try their best to study the Quran from other women; learning from men is allowed only under extreme circumstances.

According to a hadith in Muslim and Bukhārī, when a person is about to pass in front of someone who is offering *ṣalāt*, a man can raise his voice and say *subḥān Allāh* if a person is about to pass in front of him while he is in *ṣalāt*. On the other hand, a woman cannot raise her voice and can only hit the palm of one hand on the backside of the other.

Now, whether the voice of a woman in itself is a part of her *satr* is disagreed upon. Imam Shāfi'ī does not include it in the definition of *satr* for women. There is a difference of opinion among the students of Imam Abū Ḥanīfa. Ibn Hummām includes it in the *satr* for which reason the Ḥanafīs say that it is not preferable for a woman to call *adhān*. However, it is evident from the aḥādīth that the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ spoke with the non-maḥram men from behind a curtain even after the revelation of the aya of hijab. Conclusively, [it may be said] that wherever the voice has the potential to create *fitna* for both men and women, it is forbidden and where there is no such likelihood, it is permissible to speak with a non-maḥram man. For the sake of precaution though, it is preferable that women not speak to non-maḥram men unnecessarily.

Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ writes:

When Allah ﷻ has included the sounds of jewelry worn by a woman as an expression of her beauty, it would also be forbidden for a woman to wear colorful and decorated outer garments [like a *jilbāb* or '*abāya*] when she is amongst non-maḥram men.

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

... And repent to Allah ﷻ O Believers, all of you, so that you may achieve success.⁷⁶

After Allah ﷻ orders men and then women to lower their gaze and orders women to observe hijab from non-maḥram men, Allah ﷻ informs both men and women that the matter of carnal desires is dangerous. Others may not know what transpires within a person but Allah ﷻ knows both the hidden and the apparent; therefore, if anyone has transgressed from the above injunctions, he should repent and make firm resolution to never disobey Allah ﷻ again.⁷⁷



A GRAVE MISUNDERSTANDING

The fact is that all the above injunctions in abovementioned ayas of Sūrat al-Nūr are to prevent adultery and rape. Thus, they provide the best preventative strategies and treatment for the protection of both men and women's honor and modesty. Also, these commands are the most effective for shaping character and gaining purification of the inner self [*tazkiyat al-bāṭin*]. However, those who are blinded by selfishness and carnal desires will not be able to appreciate the beauty of these ayas.

In blind faith of the West and imprisoned by their carnal desires, many wish to do away with these commands which preserve the honor [of women]. They reinterpret the words *illā mā ṣahara minhā* (except that which appears thereof) in a way that suits their purpose. They claim that since some of the Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم and tābi'īn have been reported to interpret this portion of the aya as meaning face and hands, it is therefore permissible for women to come in public with their faces uncovered. This misconception is being promoted for the sheer purpose of following western values and obtaining freedom from the dictates of Dīn.

76 24:31

77 Ma'ārif al-Qur'an

The reality, as explained before, is that the words *except that which appears thereof* is to clarify that a woman is allowed to expose her face and hands when worldly and religious needs and circumstances necessitate it. It is a general rule which in no way is meant to define the people in front of whom a woman is or is not allowed to uncover. The next aya defines the men before whom a woman is allowed to uncover her face, hands and beauty. The following aya,

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ

and must not expose their adornment, except to their husbands or their fathers

clearly states that women may not expose their face and hands except in front of mahārim men.

If *except that which appears thereof* allows women to uncover their faces in front of men as deduced by the blind followers of the West then:

- I If a woman's face and hands were exempt from the command of concealing her beauty and jewelry, then why was it necessary to list the people before whom she can expose her face and hands in the next part of the aya? The fact is that the aya,

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ

and must not expose their adornment, except to their husbands or their fathers

has nothing to do with hijab but with those parts of a woman's body [satr] that are forbidden for her to expose. The next part of the aya is about hijab and those men in front of whom she can expose her hands and face [i.e. appear without hijab]. Thus, it is made clear that it is forbidden to uncover the face in front of all men except the mahārim. Thus, the commentators of the Qur'an, such as

Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Kathīr explain the aya accordingly. Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه explains:

فهذا تظهر في بيتها لمن دخل من الناس عليها

A woman can expose her beauty in her home only in front of those men who are permitted to enter her home and be in her company.

This point clarifies that women can expose their beauty in their homes in front of only those men who are permitted to enter the home [i.e. the maḥārim]. [I seek refuge in Allah ﷻ!] In no way does it mean that she may expose her beauty on the streets or marketplaces. The above aya confirms that there is no harm for a woman to expose her beauty [face and hands] in front of the men who are permitted in her home according to the Shari'a, such as her father, brother, etc. Ibn Jarīr states that it is not permissible for women to display their beauty in front of anyone except maḥārim.

'Allāma Ibn Kathīr writes:

In this aya, Allah ﷻ listed the maḥārim of a woman and said that though she is permitted to expose her beauty before them, it must not be with the intent to show off her adornment.⁷⁸

- 2 If *except that which appears thereof* meant women could uncover their faces in front of non-maḥram men, then why was it necessary to command them to lower their gaze in the previous aya?

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ

And tell the believing men that they must lower their gazes

- 3 If it was permissible for women to go freely in front of anyone with their faces exposed, then why did Allah ﷻ order men to seek permission before entering a house in Sūrat al-Nūr?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْأَلُوا

*O ye who believe, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you ask for permission.*⁷⁹

Allah ﷻ addresses the women:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى

*Remain in your homes, and do not display [your] beauty as it used to be displayed in the days of earlier ignorance ...*⁸⁰

If women were allowed to move around freely with their faces exposed, then why was this command necessary?

- 4 Allah ﷻ says:

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ فَاَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ

*And when you ask any thing from them [the blessed wives of the Prophet], ask them from behind a curtain. That is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts...*⁸¹

This aya proves that talking to women from behind a curtain preserves the purity of the heart while talking without any curtain between them contaminates the hearts [and becomes a cause for *fitna*].

79 24:27

80 33:33

81 33:53

- 5 And if a woman must talk to a man from behind a curtain, she is commanded to:

فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا

...So, do not be too soft in your speech, lest someone having disease in his heart should develop fancies [about you]; and do speak with appropriate words.⁸²

If it was permissible for a woman to come out freely in front of men, then what was the need for this command?

- 6 Furthermore, Allah ﷻ commands the women:

وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ

...And let them not stamp their feet in a way that the adornment they conceal is known...⁸³

This is because the noise from the jewelry will draw the attention of strangers and may excite their desires thus creating the possibility of fitna.⁸⁴

Now, in light of the above arguments, who can claim that the Shari'a, which attempts to close all the different avenues that lead to lewdness, sexual excitement and freedom, opens them anew and allows women to go freely in front of others with their faces exposed?



SEEKING PERMISSION BEFORE ENTERING A HOUSE

The Shari'a also requires that we seek permission and not trespass into other's homes in order to preserve the privacy and sanctity of the home. Allah ﷻ says:

82 33:32

83 24:31

84 Ma'arif al-Qur'an

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَيَّ
أَهْلِهَا ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

*O you who believe, do not enter houses, other than your own houses unless you seek permission and greet their inmates with salām. That is good for you, so that you may be heedful.*⁸⁵

One of the major reasons for the above order is to allow women of the house time to move into the inner quarters of the house before a non-mahram walks in. This subject will be discussed later, if Allah ﷻ wills.



INJUNCTIONS CONCERNING ELDERLY WOMEN

Shari'a makes concessions for elderly women who no longer have sexual desires. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْرُبُوا نِسَاءَكُمْ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا بَلَغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهْرِ وَرَبَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَ هُنَّ طَوَّافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمْ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ وَأَنْ يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَهُنَّ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

O you who believe, the slaves owned by you, and those of you who have not reached puberty, must seek your permission [to see you]

at three times; before the prayer of Fajr, and when you take off your clothes at noon [to lie down or sleep], and after the prayer of Isha. These are three times of privacy for you. There is no harm, neither to you nor to them, after these [three times]. They are your frequent visitors, as some of you are [frequent visitors] of the others. This is how Allah ﷻ explains the ayas to you. Allah ﷻ is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

When the children from among you reach puberty, they must seek permission, as the permission is sought by those before them. This is how Allah ﷻ explains His ayas to you. Allah ﷻ is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

And those old women who have no hope for marriage, there is no sin on them, if they take off their [extra] clothes while they do not display their adornment. Still, that they refrain [even from this] is better for them. Allah ﷻ is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.⁸⁶

Two exceptions are mentioned in the aforementioned discussion of the previous ayas. One exception is regarding the person who observes and the other for the one being observed. The first exception is for maḥārim, prepubescent children, and slave women—that they may move about freely in the house with the exception of specific times. The second exception is for women to move freely in the home without their outer robes.

The third aya provides concession for such elderly women who no longer desire to get married nor are they attracted to men. They are allowed to take off their outer garments ('abāya, hijab, robes, etc.) in front of men other than maḥārim, provided it is without display of their make-up and adornments. Despite the concession, they are reminded that it is preferable to remain modest [and continue to wear their outer garments].

'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه narrates that elderly women are allowed to take off their big shawls and hijab and can wear their normal clothes with simple scarves.

86 24:58-60



SUMMARY

In conclusion, all the aforementioned ayas can be summarized as follows:

- Women should not leave their homes unless absolutely necessary.
- If they must leave their home, they should wrap themselves in outer cloaks [‘abāya or jilbāb] so as not to expose any part of their bodies.
- Men and women should not look at each other without utmost necessity.
- If men need to talk to women, they should do so from behind a curtain.
- When women need to talk to men, it should be done from behind a curtain and they should speak sternly and not in a sweet and friendly voice.
- Women may keep their face, hands and feet uncovered in front of maḥārim without exposing the rest of their limbs. They should observe the requirements of satr at all times.





Chapter 2

EVIDENCE FROM HADITH

MANY AḤĀDĪTH were narrated in the first chapter on evidence from Qur'an. As it is unnecessary to repeat them, a few new aḥādīth will be brought [in this chapter] from the remaining compilation. To compile and cite all the aḥādīth on this issue is neither possible for an incapable person like me nor is it necessary. I believe that the evidence from the Qur'an alone is sufficient for one who wishes to follow it; and for those who do not wish to live by the Shari'a, even the largest collection of Quranic ayas and aḥādīth is of no use. In these times, we observe men and women sitting together in the name of studying the Qur'an during which they read these injunctions but are completely unaffected by them. It is as if they are mocking Allah's commandments, sitting together without any hijab or partition. For such people, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "Many of those who read the Qur'an are such that the Qur'an curses them."

Firstly, I will mention some hadith which illustrate how strict the Ṣaḥābiyāt ﷺ were in observing hijab. In this regard, they were the same with all men. They observed hijab in front of every man including the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and covered every part of their body including their faces.



THE HIJAB OF THE ṢAḤĀBIYĀT ﷺ

After the revelation of the aya of hijab, the Ṣaḥābiyāt ﷺ were very particular about observing hijab. They even covered themselves in front of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and never came out in front of him without hijab. If they needed to give or take something or ask questions, they did so behind a curtain. Therefore, in a long hadith, ‘Ā’isha ﷺ narrates:

١ . عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت أومت امرأة من وراء ستر بيدها كتاب إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقبض النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يده فقال ما أدرى أيد رجل أم يد امرأة قالت بل يد امرأة قال لو كنت امرأة لغيرت أظفارك بالحناء

A woman extended her hand from behind a curtain to hand a piece of paper to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ pulled his hand back and said, “I don’t know if it is a man’s or a woman’s hand.” She said that it was a woman’s hand. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ responded, “If you were a woman, you would have colored your nails with henna.”¹

This hadith is clear evidence that the Ṣaḥābiyāt ﷺ observed hijab from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. This is why the woman extended her hand from behind the curtain. If it was acceptable for women to come without hijab in front of men, then what was the need for a curtain? Also, if this type of hijab was opposed to the Shari‘a, then the Blessed Prophet ﷺ would have promptly informed her so that others are not led astray.

٢ . عن قيس بن شماس رضي الله عنه قال جاءت امرأة إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقال لها أم خلاد وهي منتقبة فسالت عن ابنها وهو مقتول فقال لها بعض أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم جئت تسألين

¹ Abū Dāwūd, *fī al-Khidāb li al-Nisā*

عن إبنك وأنت منتقبة فقالت إن أرزأ إبنی فلن أرزأ حیائی فقال رسول
الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إبنك له أجر شهيدین قالت ولم ذاك یارسول
الله فقال إنه قتله أهل الكتاب .

Qais ibn Shammās رضی اللہ عنہ reported that a Şahābiya رضی اللہ عنہا whose name was Umm Khallād رضی اللہ عنہا, came to see the Blessed Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم to inquire about her son who had been martyred in a battle. She was hiding her face behind a veil. One of the Şahāba رضی اللہ عنہم asked her, “You have come to inquire about your martyred son and you have covered your face with a veil?” She responded, “I am distressed by the loss of my son, I don’t wish to be distressed by the loss of my modesty [ḥayā]² as well.” The Blessed Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said to her, “Your son will have the rewards of two martyrs.” She asked him, “How come, O Prophet of Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم?” He responded, “Because he was killed by the People of the Book.”³



OBSERVANCE OF HIJAB EVEN IN DISTRESS

It is clear from the above hadith that Umm Khallād رضی اللہ عنہا veiled her face from the Şahāba رضی اللہ عنہم; it also indicates her high level of modesty. Despite the loss of her son, she remained faithful to the orders of Allah ﷻ and even compared losing her modesty to losing her son.

This hadith also teaches us that hijab is a requisite for women regardless of the circumstances of sorrow or happiness. Nowadays, some people are under the impression that [the Shari‘a is only to be followed in normal conditions]. In distressful or joyous occasions, [they claim that] one is exempt from following the Shari‘a and is not required to follow it; [however,] this is grave ignorance. Women are now seen in funeral processions standing at the doors without hijab as the deceased is being led away or even joining the processions to the graveyard without hijab. They are also seen without hijab in weddings and while travelling. In all these situations, it is forbidden to come out without hijab.

2 *Ḥayā* means modesty and shyness. In Islamic terminology, *ḥayā* refers to the feeling that enjoins good and forbids evil.

3 Abū Dāwūd, *Faḍl Qitāl al-Rūm*

Furthermore, this hadith proves that it is necessary to cover the face in the Shari‘a as the Ṣaḥābiya رضي الله عنها covered her face with a veil.



OBSERVING HIJAB WHILE MAKING BAI‘A⁴

The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself observed the injunctions about hijab with non-maḥram women.

Like men, women also took *bai‘a* with the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Though, the difference was that when he took *bai‘a* with men he held their hands while with women he took *bai‘a* from behind a curtain and refused to touch their hands. This is because touching a non-maḥram woman is forbidden in the same way that looking at her is forbidden.

٣ . عن أميمة بنت رقيقة رضي الله عنها قالت أتيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في نسوة بايعنه على الإسلام فقلنا له يا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نبايعك على أن لا نشرك بالله شيئاً ولا نسرق ولا ننزى ولا نقتل أولادنا ولا نأتى بهتان نفتريه بين أيدينا وأرجلنا ولا نعصيك فى معروف فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما إستطعتن وأطقتن قالت فقلن الله ورسوله أرحم بنا من أنفسنا هلم نبايعك يا رسول الله فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إني لا أصافح النساء إنما قولى لمائة امرأة كقولى لإمرأة واحدة أو مثل قولى لإمرأة واحدة

Umaiya رضي الله عنها reported, “I and some other women came to the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make bai‘a. The women said, ‘O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, we make bai‘a with you on the following conditions—that we will not associate anyone with Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم; that we will not steal; that we will not indulge in fornication and adultery [*zinā*]; that we will not kill our offspring; that we will not wrongfully ascribe our illegitimate children to our husbands; and that we will not disobey you in

4 An oath of allegiance to submit and obey.

doing good deeds.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to them, “And say that you will follow all these to the best of your ability.” The women responded, “Allah ﷻ and His Prophet are more merciful on us than we are on ourselves.” And then they said, “We have verbally accepted this, now let us put our hand in yours to complete this bai‘a.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to them, “I do not shake hands with women; what I have said verbally is mandatory on everyone and it is not necessary to do bai‘a individually since what I said to you is as if I had said it to one hundred women.”⁵

‘Ā’isha ؓ says:

فمن أقر بهذا الشرط من المؤمنات قال لها رسول الله صلى الله عليه
وسلم قد بايعتك كلاما ولا والله ما مست يده يد امرأة قط في المبايعة
ما يبايعهن إلا بقوله قد بايعتك على ذلك

From among the women, whoever agreed to these conditions [which were mentioned in the previous hadith and in *Sūrat al-Mumtaḥina*] the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to her, “I made bai‘a with you.” By Allah ﷻ, his hands never touched a woman’s hand even at the time of making bai‘a with them. He made bai‘a with women verbally and then would say to them: ‘*qad bāya’tuki*’ (I have accepted your bai‘a).

Both these ahadith clearly prove that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the mentor of all mankind, never touched a woman’s hand even at the time of taking bai‘a. When women came and took bai‘a with him, he accepted their bai‘a verbally. When they insisted upon holding his hand, he told them:

إني لا أصافح النساء

I do not shake hands with women.⁶

5 al-Muwattaʿa, *Mā Jāʿ fi al-Baiʿa*

6 Nisāʿi, *Baiʿat al-Nisāʿ* | Ibn Ḥabbān, *Baiʿat al-Aʿimma*

And then he would say, “I would say the same had it been one hundred woman or only one” i.e. saying the bai‘a is sufficient and holding the hands is not required. What is the need to hold the hands when the bai‘a can be carried out verbally?



WIVES OF THE BLESSED PROPHET ﷺ OBSERVING HIJAB IN FRONT OF ṢAḤĀBA ﷺ

It is clear from the above hadith that the Ṣaḥābiyat ﷺ strictly observed hijab from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, despite being mothers of the Umma and forbidden upon every man in the Umma, observed strict hijab from all the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ. Thus, ‘Ā’isha ﷺ says in a long hadith about the incident of *Ifk*:

٤. فخرجت مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعد ما أنزل
الحجاب فجئت منازلهم وليس بها منهم داع ولا مجيب (قد
انطلق الناس) وكان صفوان بن المعطل السلمى ثم الذكوانى من
وراء الجيش فاصبح عند منزلى فرأى سواد إنسان نائم فعرفنى حين
رأى وكان رأتى قبل الحجاب فاستيقظت باسترجائه حين عرفنى
فخمرت وجهى بجلبابى

I accompanied the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in a battle after the revelation of the ayas of hijab.... I arrived back at the army camp after they left. There was no one left to call or answer [everyone had left with the army]. Ṣafwān ibn Mu‘aṭṭal ﷺ who was left behind reached where I was in the morning. He saw a person sleeping. He recognized me as he had seen me before the revelation of the ayas of hijab. He recited loudly, “*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji‘ūn.*” His voice woke me up and I covered my face immediately with my shawl.⁷

7 Bukhārī, *Ḥadīth al-Ifk*

This hadith proves in many different ways that the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ observed hijab. First, the fact that ‘Ā’isha ؓ was left behind in the desert clearly points to that their hijab was not limited to ‘abāya or wrapping a shawl. Instead, they traveled in a palanquin [*haudaj*] mounted on a camel’s back. The palanquin was like an enclosed room.

In this incident, it is mentioned that when the army was ready to depart, the servants carried the palanquin and mounted it on the camel. They thought that ‘Ā’isha ؓ was inside [she had a slim frame] though she had left the palanquin in the darkness [of the night] to answer the call of nature. Thus, the army departed and she was left alone in the desert. The servants could not look inside the palanquin to ensure that she was inside as it was not permissible to do so after the revelation of the ayas of hijab.

This incident also corroborates the fact that, during the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the women generally stayed at home and only used the palanquin [as a substitute for their home] while travelling and which served as a covered enclosure for them.

When ‘Ā’isha ؓ returned and saw that the army had departed, she said, “I sat down thinking that when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ realizes, he will come searching for me. Overcome by sleep, I laid down and fell asleep. The next morning as Ṣafwān ibn Mu‘aṭṭal ؓ was passing by, he saw someone lying down and came to see who it was. He recognized me immediately as he had seen me before the revelation of the ayas of hijab. Recognizing me, he loudly recited ‘*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji‘ūn.*’ His voice awakened me and I covered my face with my shawl.”

The statement by ‘Ā’isha ؓ that Ṣafwān ibn Mu‘aṭṭal ؓ recognized her because he had seen her before the revelations of hijab also proves that it was no longer possible for anyone to see the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ after these commands were revealed. She also mentioned that as soon as she heard his voice and woke up, she covered her face with her shawl which clearly proves that it was necessary to cover her face as part of hijab.

Despite being the mothers of the Umma, the fact that the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ observed hijab is also evident from the incident of Ṣafiyya’s ؓ wedding to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Anas ؓ narrates:

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ stayed for three nights between Khaibar and Madina and was married to Ṣafiyya ؓ who spent the three nights with him. I invited the Muslims to his *walima* in

the jungle and there was neither meat nor bread in that banquet except that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ ordered the leather mats to be fastened down with spears upon which dates, dried yogurt and butter were laid out. The Muslims spoke amongst themselves and wondered if Şafiyya ؓ was one of the mothers of the believers, [i.e. one of the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ] or of that which his right hand possesses [prisoner of war]. Some of them said that if the Blessed Prophet ﷺ makes her observe hijab, it indicates that she is one of the mothers of the believers [i.e. one of the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ wives], and if he does not make her observe hijab, then she is his slavegirl. Therefore, when he departed, he made a place for her behind him [on his camel] and made her observe hijab.

The above hadith proves that the Şahāba ؓ understood that a free woman was required to observe hijab. Thus, if he asked her to observe hijab, it indicated that she is his wife; otherwise she is a slave girl. Thus, if hijab had not been established by then, the Şahāba ؓ would have never used it as a criterion.



HIJAB FOR FEMALE SERVANTS

Another noteworthy point is that the slavegirls or female captives mentioned in the above hadith refers to women who are captured as prisoners of war in a battle with disbelievers and who are distributed amongst the soldiers to be looked after. Such women legally became slave women. There are no such male or female slaves in our present time. The women employed to work as household aids do not fall in the category of “female slaves.” They are required to observe hijab as free women do.

In another hadith, it is stated that at the time of the Battle of Mu'ta when Zaid ibn Hāritha ؓ, Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib ؓ and 'Abd Al-lāh ibn Rawāḥa ؓ were martyred, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was deeply saddened and was at 'Ā'ishā's ؓ home at the time. A man came and informed him that Ja'far's ؓ family was crying and mourning loudly. The narrator of the hadith, 'Ā'isha ؓ, said she watched everything through the hole in the door and heard the Blessed Prophet ﷺ order

[the man] that, “Tell the women to stop mourning loudly.”⁸ This hadith proves that the mothers of the believers ﷺ did not come out in front of non-maḥram men.

In another hadith, it is narrated that ‘Ā’isha ﷺ observed hijab from Aflaḥ ﷺ when he came to meet her. He said, “Why are you observing hijab from me, I am your foster uncle [since ‘Ā’isha ﷺ drank milk from the wife of Aflaḥ’s brother]? ‘Ā’isha ﷺ replied, “A woman breastfed me, not a man.” She related the complete incident to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ when he arrived later. He then gave her permission not to observe hijab from Aflaḥ.⁹

This hadith is proof that the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ were extremely cautious in matters of hijab.



OBSERVING HIJAB DURING MEDICAL TREATMENT

In the Shari‘a, the hijab is a perpetual obligation which must be observed under any and all circumstances including during medical treatment. Jābir ﷺ narrates:

٥ . عن جابر رضى الله عنه أن أم سلمة رضى الله عنها إستأذنت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى الحجامة فأمر أبا طيبة أن يحجمها قال حسبت أنه كان أخاها من الرضاعة أو غلاما لم يحتمل

Once Umm Salama ﷺ asked permission from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ for bloodcupping [*hijāma*].¹⁰ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked Abū Ṭaiba to cup Umm Salama ﷺ. Jābir ﷺ said, “I think the Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked Abū Ṭaiba to cup Umm Salama ﷺ because he was either her foster brother or a prepubescent boy.”¹¹

8 Bukhārī, *Mā Yanhā ‘an al-Nauḥ wa al-Bukā*

9 Abū Dāwūd, *fī Laban al-Faḥl*

10 Cupping-The application of a cup shaped instrument to the skin to draw blood for the purpose of bloodletting.

11 Muslim, *likulli Dā’in Dawā’un*

This hadith points out that hijab is necessary even during medical treatment, otherwise Jābir رضي الله عنه would have not needed to clarify that Abū Ṭaiba was Umm Salama's رضي الله عنها foster brother or a prepubescent boy.

In this day and age, even religious families which are otherwise strict in matters of hijab, become careless in observing hijāb while seeking medical treatment. The above hadith proves that one should find a maḥram if possible for medical treatment otherwise a non-maḥram may provide treatment as well.



TO UNCOVER SATR FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

It is permissible to uncover satr for medical reasons but only as much as is absolutely necessary according to the following principle of Shari'a:

الضرورة تقدر بقدر الضرورة

A necessity is allowed to the extent of necessity

For example, if the physician can suffice with checking the pulse and asking about the symptoms, he will not be permitted to touch or see anything. Similarly, if the arm or ankle is wounded, he may see only the arm or ankle. If he needs to examine the eyes, nose or mouth, then only that part may be uncovered and not the entire face. These restrictions will also apply to a physician who is a maḥram of the patient since he is also not allowed to look at the body of a maḥram woman. She is not permitted to uncover her back, her front, or her thighs even in front of the maḥārim. Therefore, if the wound is in such an area, the physician may only examine that much area only, regardless of whether he is a maḥram or not. This may be accomplished by wearing old clothes with a hole cut in the area of the wound. Since a woman is not permitted to uncover any parts of her body between the navel and the knees in front of other women, therefore, a lady physician will only be permitted to examine the affected areas through openings that accommodate those areas. It should also be remembered that while the physician is examining the patient, any relatives present at the time are not permitted to observe those parts, except for one who is lawfully

permitted to see them. For example, the father and brother may see the ankle during the physical examination as it is not forbidden for a maḥram to observe the ankle of a maḥram woman.

It should be clearly understood that all the above rulings apply to the medical treatment of men also since it is not permitted for men to uncover their body parts between the navel and the knee in front of other men. Therefore, if the physician needs to examine a man's buttocks or give an injection in that area he is only permitted to see as much as is absolutely necessary.



HIJAB IN IḤRĀM

The importance of hijab in the Shari‘a is such that a woman is required to observe hijab even in the state of *iḥrām*.

٦ . عن عائشة رضی الله عنها قالت كان الركبان يمرون بنا ونحن مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم محرمات فإذا حاذوا بنا سدلت إحدانا جلبابها من رأسها إلى وجهها فإذا جاوزونا كشفناه

‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها narrates, “We were with the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the state of *iḥrām* [during hajj]. When men passed by us, we pulled our shawls in front of our faces; and when they passed us, we lifted them off.¹²

Due to ignorance, many people believe that hijab is not necessary in the state of *iḥrām* since it is not permissible to have clothes or anything else touch the face while one is in *iḥrām*. Such assumptions are based on ignorance as the above hadith is clear that hijab is necessary even in the state of *iḥrām*. However, the way of observing hijab in *iḥrām* is slightly different. One way, for example, is that the woman wear a hat with a projected flap by which the veil hangs over her face and does not touch it [hijab is observed in this way by a number of women in the

¹² Abū Dāwūd, *fi al-Mar’ati Tughaffi Wajhabā* | al-Baihaqī, *al-Muḥrima Talbisu al-Thaub*

state of iḥrām]. The wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ also covered their faces with their shawls in front of non-maḥram men during iḥrām.

A similar hadith is narrated by Fāṭima bint Mundhir ؓ. She says:

We would cover our faces with our shawls in the state of iḥrām. Asmā' ؓ, the daughter of Abū Bakr ؓ, was also with us and she did not stop us from this.¹³

In other words, Asmā' ؓ never rebuked them for covering their face in iḥrām saying it was forbidden [for a woman to cover her face in the state of iḥram].

In another hadith, 'Ā'isha ؓ narrates that a woman should hang her shawl in front of her face in the state of iḥrām.¹⁴



IMPORTANCE OF HIJAB WITH IN-LAWS

People living in the same home often become so inured to each other that the rules of Shari'ā never cross their mind in this regard. Therefore, it is often seen that hijab is not observed with the brothers-in-law, though much emphasis is laid on observing hijab from them.

٧ . عن عقبه بن عامر رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إياكم والدخول على النساء فقال رجل يا رسول الله أرايت الحموموت قال الحموموت

'Uqba ibn 'Āmir ؓ narrates, "The Blessed Prophet ﷺ once said, 'do not go near non-maḥram women. One man from amongst them asked him, "O Prophet of Allah, what is the command about the in-laws of a woman?" The Blessed Prophet ﷺ responded, "The [dangers in not observing hijab with] in-laws are like death."¹⁵

13 al-Muwatta', *Takhmīr al-Muḥrim Wajhabū*

14 Faṭḥ al-Bārī, *Mā Yunhā min al-Ṭīb*

15 Bukhārī, *lā Yakbluwanna Rajulun bi Imra'a*

The most important part of the abovementioned hadith is that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ compared the in-laws to death [i.e. that a woman must be more careful in observing hijab with her brothers-in-law]. Although a woman is required to observe hijab with all non-mahram men, she should avoid the brothers-in-law as she would avoid death and observe hijab from them.

The reason behind this ruling is that since male in-laws are considered part of the family, they freely enter and are invited into the ladies section which at times results in illicit relations. It never occurs to the unassuming husband to prohibit them from his wife as he thinks them part of the family. But, if they come to his house frequently and the husband happens to be away, many unlikely things may occur. It is not as easy for a neighbor to seduce his neighbor's wife as it is for a brother-in-law to seduce or abuse his sister-in-law.

It is for these reasons that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ strongly advised that a woman strictly observe hijab with her in-laws and to avoid the men amongst them as one avoids death. Similarly, the men are instructed not to freely mix with their sisters-in-law and to avoid gazing at them.



COMMANDMENTS ABOUT MODESTY [ḤAYĀ] AND HONOR

All the ahadith mentioned above were about observing the hijab and covering the face and the rest of the body. Besides this, the Shari'a has laid down rules [aside from the commandments of hijab] which relate to hijab and which, if not followed carefully, may also lead to vulgarity and shamelessness. In other words, [aside from the observance of hijab] many other such things are also forbidden in the Shari'a that may otherwise lead to indecency and lewdness.

Modesty and maintaining one's honor are of primary importance in preserving the moral fiber of any society. This is why modesty is called the ornament of a woman that protects her from many sins and also prevents ill-natured men from entertaining dirty thoughts about her. Modesty is intrinsic to the nature of a woman in order to safeguard her against abuse by immoral men.

٨. عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال إن الحياء والإيمان قرنا جميعا فاذا رفع أحدهما رفع الآخر

‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates, “The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed *ḥayā* and *īmān* are companions. When one of them is lifted, the other leaves also.”¹⁶

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said that *ḥayā* is one part of *īmān*.¹⁷

Once, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ saw a man admonishing his brother about *ḥayā*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Leave him for verily, *ḥayā* is one part of *īmān*.”¹⁸

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Nothing but good comes out of *ḥayā*.”¹⁹

In another hadith he said, “Lewdness is never a part of anything but it disfigures it and *ḥayā* is never a part of anything but it beautifies it.”²⁰

In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “The first to leave this world are *ḥayā* and trustworthiness; therefore, ask for them from Allah ﷻ.”²¹

The truth is that *ḥayā* is the main characteristic of a true believer. People ignorant of the teachings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ do not concern themselves with attaining *ḥayā*. *Ḥayā* is one aspect of *īmān* and both *ḥayā* and *īmān* are mutually dependent on each other; therefore, the life of one is the life of the other and the death of one is the death of the other. Thus, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in one hadith, “When no *ḥayā* is left in you, then do what you please.”²²

Today, shamelessness and all that it constitutes has even pervaded the lives of known Muslims who embrace it in blind faith to the disbelievers. Such people have struggled [for the longest time] to take the Muslim women out of hijab and [mire them] in immodesty and

16 al-Adab al-Mufrad, *al-Ḥayā* | Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaiba, *Mā Dhukira fī al-Ḥayā*

17 Ibn Māja, *al-Ḥayā* | Tirmidhī, *al-Ḥayā’ min al-Īmān*

18 Bukhārī, *al-Ḥayā’ min al-Īmān*

19 Shu‘b al-Īmān, 6/131 | al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr, 18/119

20 Tirmidhī, *al-Faḥsh wa al-Tafāḥḥush*

21 Shu‘b al-Īmān, 4/325 | Kanz al-‘Ummāl, 3/121

22 Bukhārī, *Idhā lam Tastahyī*

indecent. They adopt the lifestyle of the disbelievers more than the Sunna of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and have placed themselves in a quagmire. On the one hand, they desire to look at the half-clad bodies of the wives and daughters of other Muslims on the streets; on the other hand, they do not have the courage to deny the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith. Neither can they say that they have renounced Islam nor can they see Muslim women observing hijab. The reality of the matter is that they have indulged in improper acts and thus destroyed their sense of honor and modesty which Islam commands one to preserve. [And] it is this very natural desire to save one's honor which compels men to protect the honor of their women.

٩ . عن مالك بن أخيمير رضى الله عنه قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا يقبل الله من الصقور يوم القيامة صرفا ولا عدلا قيل يارسول الله ما الصقور قال الذى يدخل الرجل على أهله

Mālik ibn Ukhaiṁir رضي الله عنه narrates, "I heard the Blessed Prophet ﷺ say, 'On the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ will not accept any good deeds or worship from a *suqur*.' He was asked, 'O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! What is *suqur*?' He said, 'The one whose wife entertains other men [with his knowledge].'"²³

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "Three men will never go to Paradise nor will they smell its fragrance; first, a man who appears as a woman; second, an alcoholic; and third, a *dayyūth*." People asked, "O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! Who is a *dayyūth*?" He replied, "One who tolerates indecent behavior in his wife." In another narration, he says, "One who does not maintain honor and decency in his wife."²⁴

In another narration he replies, "*Dayyūth* is a person who does not care who visits his wife."²⁵

In one hadith, it is narrated that no one has a better sense of honor than Allah ﷻ and this is why He has forbidden lewdness.²⁶

23 al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, 19/294 | Shu'b al-Īmān, 7/412

24 Tafsīr Āyāt al-Aḥkām

25 al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, Jam'u al-Fawā'id

26 Bukhārī, *Sūrat al-An'ām*

Once Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda رضي الله عنه said, "I will not hesitate killing my wife with my sword if I see her with a strange man." The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the gathering, "Are you surprised at Sa'd's sense of honor? I have a higher sense of honor than Sa'd and Allah تعالى has a higher sense of honor than me."

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have a sense of honor. Only a person with a darkened heart is deprived of a sense of honor."²⁷ This hadith indicates that excessive indulgence in indecent and lustful acts gives rise to loss of wisdom and the ability to differentiate between good and evil.



TO GO OUT WITHOUT NECESSITY

Another important rule on societal purity and hijab in the Shari'a is that women should not leave their homes without necessity as it leads to fitna.

١٠ . عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
قال المرأة عورة وإنما إذا خرجت إستشرفها الشيطان وإنما لا تكون
أقرب إلى الله منها في قعر بيتها

'Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Women are to be concealed. Indeed when she leaves her home, Satan keeps an eye on her. Certainly a woman is closest to Allah تعالى when she is in her home."²⁸

Truly, a woman is safest from every evil when she is in her home. When she steps out of her home without necessity, she becomes a prospective tool for Satan. This is why it is said in one hadith that when a woman comes before a non-maḥram, she appears in the guise of Satan.²⁹

27 Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn

28 al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, 10/108 | Ibn Ḥabbān, *al-Ḥaṣar wa al-Ibāḥā*

29 Abū Dāwūd, *Mā Yu'maru min Ghaḍḍ al-Baṣr*

In another hadith, Mu'ādh رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Protect yourselves from the mischief of women because Iblis [Satan] is a wise hunter; he hunts successfully through women."³⁰

In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have not found any fitna more harmful for men than women."³¹

In another hadith, he said, "This world is sweet and attractive and Allah تعالى has made you His deputy here. He watches over you to see how you conduct yourselves. You should protect yourself from the love of this world and from the fitna of women because the very first evil in Bani Israel came by women."³²

It is necessary for women, in order to preserve their modesty and honor, to stay in their homes and to avoid leisure outings and wandering in the shopping centers.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه narrates that:

Once the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم, "What is the best thing for a woman?" No one responded. Later when I went home, I asked Fāṭima رضي الله عنها the same question. She replied, "The best thing for a woman is to protect herself from the eyes of men." I told the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Fāṭima's رضي الله عنها reply. He replied, "Indeed, Fāṭima رضي الله عنها is a part of me."³³

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best deed of the women of my Umma is singlemindedness and isolation from men."³⁴

Islam emphasizes women remaining in the homes to the extent that their participation in congregational worship [like ṣalāt] and other such worships like funerals and burials is not looked upon as desirable.



OFFERING SALAT AT HOME

As mentioned previously, it is permissible for women to come out of their homes when necessary. And, since ṣalāt is a necessity, it is

30 Kanz al-'Ummāl, 16/283 | Mirqāt, *Kitā al-Nikāḥ*, 10/40

31 Bukhārī, *Mā Yuttaqā min Shu'm al-Mar'a*

32 Tirmidhī, *Mā Jā Akhbār al-Nabiyy Ṣalla Allāhu 'alaihi wa Sallam*

33 Kashf al-Astār, pg. 150

34 Shar'i Parda [Urdu]

permissible for them to go to the masjid provided they cover themselves properly and they do not wear perfume and jewelry that produces sound. However, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ preferred that they offer their ṣalāt at home:

١١ . عن عبدالله بن مسعود رضى الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال صلوة المرأة فى بيتها أفضل من صلوتها فى حجرتها و صلوتها فى محددتها أفضل من صلوتها فى بيتها

‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “It is better for a woman to offer her ṣalāt in her bedroom than in the living room and her ṣalāt in her living room is better than her ṣalāt in her courtyard.”³⁵

In another hadith, Umm Salama رضي الله عنها narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, “The best masjids for women are the innermost rooms of their homes.”³⁶

In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “The most beloved ṣalāt of a woman to Allah ﷻ is that which she offers in the innermost darkest room.”³⁷

Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “A woman’s ṣalāt offered in privacy is twenty-five times better than her ṣalāt in congregation.”³⁸

These numbers were increased until it was understood that it is better for a woman to offer her ṣalāt at home than to offer it in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām and al-Masjid al-Nabawī [where offering one ṣalāt is greater than one hundred-thousand ṣalāts and fifty-thousand ṣalāts respectively]. Therefore, in one hadith we find a story of a Ṣaḥābiya, Umm Ḥumaid رضي الله عنها, who came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! I wish to offer my ṣalāt with you in congregation in the masjid.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied,

35 Abū Dāwūd, *al-Tashdīd fī Dhālika*

36 Aḥmad, 44/164

37 Ibn Khuzaima, *Ikhtiyār Ṣalāt al-Mar’at fī Ḥujratihā*

38 Kanz al-‘Ummāl, 16/416

I know how much you desire to offer your ṣalāt behind me in congregation but offering the ṣalāt in the innermost part of your house is better than offering it in the living room, and offering ṣalāt in the living room is better than offering it in your courtyard, and offering ṣalāt in the courtyard is better than offering it in your neighborhood masjid, and offering your ṣalāt in the neighborhood masjid is better than coming to my masjid.³⁹

The narration of Ibn Khuzaima adds that after that, Umm Ḥumaid رضي الله عنها demarcated a place in the innermost and darkest corner of her house for ṣalāt and continued to offer her ṣalāt there for the rest of her life.

‘Urwa narrates that ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها said:

The women of Bani Israel made clogs which they wore to their places of worship with which they attracted men [toward themselves]; so, Allah ﷻ forbade them from going to the masjid.⁴⁰

In another hadith, ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها:

If the Blessed Prophet ﷺ had observed the behavior of women after him, he would have surely forbade them from coming to the masjid the way the women of Bani Israel were prohibited [from coming to the masjid].⁴¹



PARTICIPATION IN WAR

The best of worship is to spend one’s life in the path of Allah ﷻ. However, the Shari‘a does not prefer this virtue for women as they can earn the same rewards without participating:

١٢ . عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال جنن النساء إلى رسول الله صلى الله

عليه وسلم قلن يا رسول الله ذهب الرجال بالفضل بالجهاد في سبيل الله

39 Ibn Khuzaima, *Faḍl Ṣalāt al-Mar’a* | Aḥmad, 45/37

40 Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq, *Shuūḍ al-Nisā al-Jamā’a*

41 Muslim, *Khurūj al-Nisā ila al-Masājid*

أفما لنا عمل ندرک به عمل المجاهدين فى سبيل الله قال رسول الله صلى
الله عليه وسلم مهنة إحدآکن فى بيتها تدرک عمل المجاهدين فى سبيل الله

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates, “Once a group of women came to the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said, “O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم! Men have reaped all the rewards by fighting in the path of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. There is no deed for us through which we can equal (the reward) of those who fight in the path of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “The work of anyone of you in her home equals (the reward) of those who fight in the path of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم.”⁴²

Once, ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها asked the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, “O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم! We consider this struggle the best of deeds so then should we not participate in it also?” He replied, “Struggle for the women is to go for hajj.”⁴³

In another hadith, Abū Qatāda رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Women are not required to fight in war, attend Jumu’a, and participate in the burials.”⁴⁴



CONDITIONS FOR LEAVING THE HOUSE

From the above hadith, it is sufficiently clear that the Shari‘a disapproves of women leaving their homes except under certain conditions. Two such conditions, hijab and covering the face have been covered in the previous chapters.

a The Use of Perfume and Jewelry:

The first condition is that a women should not come out of her home wearing fragrance and jewelry:

١٣. عن ميمونة بنت سعد رضی الله عنها وكانت خادما للنبي صلى

42 Shu‘b al-Īmān, 6/420

43 Bukhārī, *Jihād al-Nisā*

44 al-Mu‘jam al-Ṣaghīr, 2/297

الله عليه وسلم قالت قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مثل الرافلة
فى الزينة فى غير أهلها كمثل ظلمة يوم القيامة لا نور لها

Maimūna bint Sa'd رضي الله عنها, who was one of the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ servants, narrated that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "A woman who adorns herself for anyone else other than her husband is like the darkness on the Day of Judgment which has no light in it."⁴⁵

The women who adorn themselves, intermingle with men in parties, and are considered the life of these parties are being called the darkness of these parties by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

In another hadith, Maimūna bint Sa'd رضي الله عنها narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "No woman comes out of her home wearing perfume and giving men the opportunity to look at her but Allah ﷻ is displeased with her until she returns home."⁴⁶

In another hadith, Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "The ill-natured eyes are adulterous and when a woman wears perfume and passes by men, she is disloyal or adulterous."⁴⁷

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ also said, "A woman who passes by men wearing perfume to entertain them is committing adultery; and so are the eyes that look upon her."⁴⁸

Ā'isha رضي الله عنها narrated that once a woman of the Muzaina tribe came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in the masjid. She was dressed fashionably and was walking amorously. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to the audience, "O people! Stop your women from dressing fashionably and from walking in the masjid amorously because Bani Israel never became accursed until their women adorned themselves and came to the masjid walking amorously."⁴⁹

45 Tirmidhī, *Karāhiyat Khurūj al-Nisā* | al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, 25/38

46 al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, 25/38

47 Tirmidhī, *Karāhiyat Khurūj al-Mar'a* | Ibn Khuzaima, *al-Taghlīz fī Ta'atṭur al-Mar'a*

48 Nisā'ī, *Mā Yukrahū li al-Nisā* | Ibn Khuzaima, *al-Taghlīz fī Ta'atṭur al-Mar'a*

49 Ibn Māja, *Fitnat al-Nisā*

Abū Huraira رضي الله عنه reported:

Once I saw a woman who was wearing strong perfume and a tight dress. I asked her, “O servant of Allah, are you coming from the masjid?” She said, “Yes.” He said to her, “I have heard my beloved Abū al-Qāsim رضي الله عنه say, ‘Allah ﷻ does not accept the ṣalāt of a woman who comes to pray wearing perfume, until she returns home and takes a bath as she does after intercourse.’”⁵⁰

Abū Huraira رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “The woman who wears perfume should not pray ‘Ishā in congregation with us.”⁵¹

b Leaving the House Without the Husband’s Permission

Another condition is that women cannot leave their homes without taking permission from their husbands first.

١٤ . عن معاذ رضی الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
لا يجزى لإمرأة تؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر أن تأذن في بيت زوجها وهو كاره
ولا تخرج وهو كاره ولا تطيع فيه أحدا

Mu‘ādh رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not permissible for any woman who believes in Allah ﷻ and the Day of Judgment to allow anyone to enter her husband’s house, or [for her] to leave home while he disapproves of it and that she should not obey anyone else in this regard.”⁵²

The rule of asking permission from the husband before leaving the house helps a woman maintain her honor and virtue. Women who leave the house whenever they want and invite whomever

50 Abū Dāwūd , *Mā Jā’ fi al-Mar’ati Tatattayabu*

51 Ibid

52 al-Baihaqī, *Mā Jā’ fi Bayāni Ḥaqqibī ‘alaibā* |al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr, 20/62

they want into their home are more likely to lose their honor and character and end up falling deeper and deeper into a life of sin.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

Allah تعالى is displeased with a woman who leaves home without her husband's permission until she returns home or until her husband is pleased with her.⁵³

In another hadith narrated by 'Umar رضي الله عنه, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even said that, "Women should not talk to non-maḥram men without their husband's permission."⁵⁴

c Women Should Not Travel Far Without a Maḥram

The Shari'a also prescribes that maḥārim men accompany women on long trips in order to protect them against fitna.

١٥ . عن ابي سعيد رضى الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال
لا يحل لإمرأة تومن بالله واليوم الآخر أن تسافر سفرا فوق ثلاثة أيام
فصاعدا إلا ومعها أبوها أو أخوها أو زوجها أو ابنها أو ذومحرم منها

Abū Sa'īd Khudrī رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Any woman who believes in Allah تعالى and the Day of Judgement should not travel alone for three days or more except when accompanied by her father, brother, husband, son or any other maḥram man."⁵⁵

The restriction of three days in Shari'a signifies any journey whereby *qaṣr* (reduced ṣalāt) is made permissible.

Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No stranger should be alone with any woman, nor should a woman travel without a maḥram. On hearing this, a man stood up and said, "O Prophet of Allah تعالى! I have been enlisted for such and such military expeditions but my wife has left for

53 Kanz al-'Ummāl, 16/606

54 Kanz al-'Ummāl, 5/463

55 Muslim, *Safr al-Mar'ati Ma'a al-Maḥram*

hajj.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “Go and perform hajj with your wife.”⁵⁶

d Women should Not Walk in the Middle of the Street

One of the conditions for women to leave their house is that they must walk separately from men. The best way to manage this is that the womenfolk walk on the side of the street since traffic usually passes through the middle.

١٦ . عن أبي أسيد الأنصاري عن أبيه رضى الله عنه أنه سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول وهو خارج من المسجد فاخطط الرجال مع النساء فى الطريق فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم للنساء إستاخرن فإنه ليس لكن أن تحقن الطريق عليكن بحافات الطريق فكانت المرأة تلتصق بالجدارحتى إن ثوبها ليتعلق بالجدار من لصوقها به

Abū Usaīd al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was coming out of the masjid. Men and women were walking very close together on the street [women were walking alongside the men]. When he saw this, he said, “O women! Move back! You should walk on the side of the street rather than in the middle.” Then, women would walk on the street so close to the wall that their clothes would get hung up against the wall.⁵⁷

The narrator mentions that after these instructions the women became so careful that they would press closely to the walls as they walked to the extent that their clothes would get hung up against the walls.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not permissible for women to come out of their homes except in dire necessity; and they should not walk on the street except on the sides.”⁵⁸

56 Bukhārī, *Man Akrataba fī Jaish*

57 Abū Dāwūd, *fī Mashy al-Nisā*

58 al-Mu‘jam al-Ausaṭ, 4/226

Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه narrates that once the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was going somewhere when a woman came and walked in front of him on the street. He asked her to move to the side but she replied, “The road is wide.” [i.e. I don’t need to move to the side. This angered the Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم] He said to them, “Leave her alone; she is a rebel.”⁵⁹

In another hadith, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited a man from walking between two women.⁶⁰



GUARDING THE EYES

One of the principles the Shari‘a has established to help create a virtuous society and to protect it from sexual anarchy is to safeguard the gaze as the eyes serve as a messenger [to the heart]. Not guarding the eyes is the first symptom of moral decay.

١٧ . عن عبدالله بن مسعود رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى
الله عليه وسلم الإثم حواز القلوب وما من نظرة إلا وللشيطان فيها مطعم

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ma‘ūd رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The sins sway the hearts; and Satan has high hopes of the eye which is raised to look at a non-maḥram.”⁶¹

In a *ḥadīth al-quḍusī*,⁶² the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم narrates that Allah تعالى says, “Gazing at a non-maḥram is one of the poisoned arrows of Satan. Whosoever will leave it [looking at non-maḥram] out of fear for Me, I will bless him with such īmān, the sweetness of which he will feel in his heart.”⁶³

59 Jāmi‘ al-Uṣūl, *fi al-Mashy Ma‘ al-Nisā*

60 Abū Dāwūd, *fi Mashy al-Nisā Ma‘ al-Rijāl*

61 al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr, 9/149

62 *ḥadīth al-quḍusī*- Sayings of Allah تعالى narrated by the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

63 al-Mustadrak, 4/349 | al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr, 10/173

At the same time, this hadith also indicates that Allah ﷻ punishes the believer who gazes at a woman by removing the sweetness of imān from his heart.

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “On the Day of Judgement, molten lead will be poured into the eyes of one who looks at a woman’s beauty lustfully.”⁶⁴

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in one hadith, “Lower your gaze and protect your private parts, otherwise, your faces will be eclipsed.”⁶⁵

In another hadith he said, “Don’t sit and wait on the roadside; but if you must, then fulfill the right of the path. One such right is to guard your gaze [from looking at the non-maḥram passersby].”⁶⁶

Guarding the gaze and controlling the desire at the time [a non-maḥram passes by] is a continuous good deed which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ encouraged in different ways. In one hadith he says, “There are three kinds of men whose eyes will not see the hellfire. First, the eye which looks out for the enemy while in the path of Allah ﷻ; second, the eye which cries out of fear of Allah ﷻ; and third, the eye which lowers its gaze from what Allah ﷻ has forbidden.”⁶⁷

Another hadith states, “Every eye will cry on the Day of Judgment except: the eye which refrained from looking at things forbidden by Allah ﷻ, the eye which is denied sleep because of surveillance at the time of war, and the eye which shed tears the size of a kernel of corn out of fear of Allah ﷻ.”⁶⁸

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “A Muslim who mistakenly sees the beauty of a woman and then lowers his gaze instead of looking at her continuously will be rewarded by Allah ﷻ with such worship the sweetness of which he will feel clearly.”⁶⁹

One hadith states, “The adultery of the eyes is to watch, the adultery of the tongue is to speak, the adultery of the ears is to listen, the adultery of the hands is to touch, the adultery of the feet is to walk and the adultery of the heart is to desire.”⁷⁰

64 Fath al-Qadīr, *Faṣl fi al-Waṭ’a* | Naṣb al-Rāya, *Faṣl fi al-Waṭ’a*

65 al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr, 8/208

66 Muslim, *min Ḥaqq al-Julūs ‘ala al-Ṭarīq*

67 al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr, 19/416

68 Ḥilyat al-Auliya

69 Aḥmad, 36/610

70 Bukhārī, *Zina al-Jawāriḥ*

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ also said, If you guarantee me six things, I guarantee you Paradise:

- 1 When you speak, do not lie,
- 2 Do not breach your trust,
- 3 Do not break a promise,
- 4 Lower your gaze,
- 5 Guard your hands against oppression,
- 6 Protect your private parts.⁷¹

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Understand clearly that Allah ﷻ curses the person who looks at non-maḥram and also those who reveal themselves in front of others.”⁷²

This hadith covers a range of subtopics on this issue [of the forbidden gaze] while establishing the rule that the forbidden gaze deserves the curse of Allah ﷻ. It [this hadith] not only condemns the person who gazes wrongfully but also the one who willfully reveals him or herself for the forbidden gaze. Both the person who reveals any such part of his/her body that is impermissible for others to look at and also the one who looks at it deserve the curse of Allah ﷻ.



WILLFULLY GOING TO A PLACE WHERE HIJAB IS NOT OBSERVED

In further explanation of the above hadith, the following circumstances also invite the curse of Allah ﷻ.

- Any woman who goes out to the marketplace or any other public place without hijab; the non-maḥram men who gaze at her will also be cursed.
- A woman who stands at her balcony, window or deck without hijab where she can see and be seen by non-maḥram men. She is cursed because of her evil gazes and also for facilitating non-maḥram men to look at her.

⁷¹ Mustadrak, 4/399

⁷² Mishkāt, *al-Naḥr ila al-Makḥṭūba*

- In weddings, the bridegroom who walks into the ladies section where he can see and be seen by non-maḥram women.
- A woman who uncovers any part of her body between the navel and the knees in front of another woman. Similarly, a man who uncovers these parts of his body in front of another man.
- A woman who uncovers any part of her body [that is part of her *satr*] in front of her maḥārim, such as her father, brother, etc. One of the many tragedies of our time is that many of the Muslim women from modern homes in blind following of women in the West will put on trendy short dresses with panties underneath. This leaves their thighs and legs visible to every man in the home including the male servants [it is forbidden to keep them at home]. In this way, all the men and women in that home deserve the curse of Allah ﷻ.

Lastly, it should be understood that *ghadd al-baṣr* (lowering the gaze) means that it is not permissible to look at non-maḥrams intentionally and that if it happens, he/she should break the gaze and not raise the head for a second look. Thus, we find in a hadith narrated by Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Bajalī رضي الله عنه that he asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ about the sudden [unintentional] glance [at a non-maḥram]. He replied “Turn your gaze away [i.e. do not look again].”⁷³

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, “O ‘Alī! There is a treasure for you in Paradise and you are it’s Zu al-Qarnain. Do not follow the first gaze with the second. The first gaze is [forgiven] for you but the second is not.”⁷⁴



BEING ALONE WITH A NON-MAḤRAM MAN

When a non-maḥram man and woman are alone together or meet in privacy, it often leads to illicit and immoral acts. This is why it is forbidden in the Shari‘a.

73 Muslim, *Naṣr al-Faja‘t* | Tirmidhī, *Naṣr al-Mufaja‘t*

74 al-Mu‘jam al-Ausaṭ, 1/209 | Ibn Ḥabbān, 12/381

١٨ . وعن عمر رضى الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لا
يخلون رجل بامرأة إلا كان ثالثهما الشيطان

‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The man is never alone with a non-maḥram woman but the third of them is Satan.”⁷⁵

We know that Satan’s objective is to lead people astray. When a man and woman are alone, he excites them and invites them to engage in sexual activity. This is why the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم strictly forbade it [being alone with the opposite gender] and why it is necessary to adhere to this injunction. Be it a teacher, mentor or cousins, women must avoid being alone with non-maḥārim and likewise the same applies to men.

‘Amr ibn ‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه narrated that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited them [the Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم] from visiting women without their husband’s permission.

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Do not visit women in the absence of their husbands because Satan moves inside of you like your blood.”⁷⁶

In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “After this day, no one should visit any woman in the absence of her husband unless he is accompanied by a few other men.”

The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, “Do not visit the wives of those dispatched for war while they are away from their homes.”⁷⁷

Jābir رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Beware, no one should spend a night alone [in a house] with a single [divorced or widowed] woman unless he is either married to her or is her maḥram.”⁷⁸

The above hadith prohibits men from spending time alone with a non-maḥram woman in the same house, especially at night. This prohibition is based on foresight and wisdom. In principle, a non-maḥram man and woman cannot be alone under any circumstance, but the specific prohibition of spending the night in one house alone is because the chances of sexual misconduct in the darkness of night is

75 Tirmidhī, *Luzūm al-Jamā’a*

76 Tirmidhī, *Bābun*, 3/475

77 Kashf al-Astār, pg. 216

78 Muslim, *Taḥrīm al-Khalwat bi al-Ajnabiya*

more likely especially when no one else is in the house. Again, all the non-mahram relatives, such as cousins and brothers-in-law, are also included in this prohibition. Often, women do not take precaution with such men and readily go in front of them without hijab.

This prohibition is for both men and women. Men are addressed in the hadith because they are physically stronger. A man will quickly overcome a woman if he can get to her and it will be difficult for her to deter him. Though, if a man does not abide by this command it becomes obligatory upon the woman to depart and leave the man alone.

The wording of the hadith is *lā yubayyitanna rajulun ‘inda imra’atin thayyibin* (a man should not spend the night with a non-mahram woman). *Thayyibin* means a widow but is also used for any woman without a husband. In that case, the word is inclusive of any single woman whether she is widowed, divorced or unmarried. Imam Nawawī writes in his commentary of Muslim that the reason why divorced and widowed women were separately mentioned in this hadith is because they are alone. Such women become easy prey for men who are looking to marry or otherwise have bad intentions. They will not attempt to meet with single girls because they are not as vulnerable and also because their parents are vigilant of them.

Then, he [Imam Nawawī] concludes:

When a non-mahram is prohibited from spending a night alone with a *thayyib* (divorced or widowed woman) and so much indifference is observed in this regard [i.e. people are usually careless in regards to visiting the homes of widows and divorced women], then one should be that much more cautious about [spending time alone with an] unmarried single women.



BATHING IN PUBLIC BATHS

Another injunction that helps safeguard the honor and purity of women is that they are not allowed to bathe in public baths.

١٩. عن جابر رضى الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فلا يدخل الحمام بغير إزار ومن كان يؤمن بالله

واليوم الآخر فلا يدخل حليلته الحمام ومن كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر
فلا يجلس على مائدة يدار عليها بالخمير

Jābir رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Whosoever believes in Allah تعالى and the Day of Judgment should not enter a public shower without covering his satr; and whosoever believes in Allah تعالى and the Day of Judgment should not take his wife into a public bath; and whosoever believes in Allah تعالى and the Day of Judgment should not sit in a place where wine is passed around.”⁷⁹

‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forbade both men and women from entering public baths. Later, he allowed the men under the condition that they keep their satr covered.

In another hadith, Umm Dardā رضي الله عنها narrates that once she met the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after bathing in a public bath. He asked me, “O Umm Dardā! Where are you coming from?” I replied, “From the public bath.” He said, “I swear by the One who holds my life in His hand, any woman who takes off her clothes anywhere else but her home rips apart the veil between herself and Allah تعالى [i.e. she disgraces herself before Allah تعالى].”⁸⁰

Qari Muḥammad Ṭayyib writes in his book *Shar’ī Parda*:

Are the hotels any less than public bathhouses, where having sexual relations with women has become an established business? Are the clubs and parks any less than the public bathhouses, where rendezvous are arranged that develop into liaisons? Are the schools any less than the public bathhouses where girls come out from under the watchful eye of their elders and are left to the mercy of strangers to do as they please and which culminates in many tragic incidents? Is this not a mirror image of the days of Jāhiliyya, for which the Qur’an was sent to repair and change?

79 Tirmidhī, *Dukhūl al-Ḥammām* | al-Mustadrak, 4/320

80 Aḥmad, 44/587 | al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr, 24/253



WOMEN PROHIBITED FROM LOOKING AT MEN

As men are commanded not to look at non-maḥram women, similarly women are instructed to abstain from looking at non-maḥram men.

٢٠. عن أم سلمة رضي عنها قالت كنت عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعنده ميمونة فأقبل ابن أم مكتوم وذلك بعد ما أمرنا بالحجاب فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إحتجبا منه فقلنا يارسول الله أليس أعمى لا يبصرنا ولا يعرفنا فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أفعميا وان أنتما ألسما تبصرانه

Umm Salama رضي عنها narrates, “Once Maimūna رضي عنها and I were with the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when ‘Abd Allāh ibn Umm Maktūm رضي عنه suddenly came in and went toward the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [Since ‘Abd Allāh رضي عنه was blind we both did not cover ourselves and remained seated in our place.]” And this is after the revelation of the commandments of hijab. The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Veil yourselves from him.” I asked, “O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم! Isn’t he blind? He can’t see us.” The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “Are the two of you blind also? Can’t you both see him?”⁸¹

It is clear from the above hadith that women should avoid looking at men also. Despite ‘Abd Allāh رضي عنه being a Ṣaḥābī رضي عنه who was blind and both the wives of the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم being pious women, the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them to observe hijab from him.



ADOPTING THE APPEARANCE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

In order to prevent moral decadence and lewdness, the Shari‘a prescribed separate commands for both men and women on how to govern themselves, which are sensible and in harmony with their nature.

81 Abū Dāwūd, *fī Qaulihī wa Qul Li al-Mu‘mināt*

[And it is known] that anything is beautiful for as long as it remains in its natural state. But once it is altered, it becomes defaced and looks the worst.

٢١. وعن ابن أبي مليكة رضى الله عنه قال قيل لعائشة رضى الله عنها إن امرأة تلبس النعل فقالت لعن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الرجل من النساء

Ibn Abi Mulaika reported that once someone asked ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها about a woman who wore men’s shoes. ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها replied, “The Prophet of Allah ﷺ has cursed a woman who adopts the ways of men.”⁸²

‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Three people will not enter Paradise. The first is the one who is disobedient to his parents; second is one who is unfaithful to his partner; and the third is the woman who adopts the appearance of a man.”⁸³

Tamīm al-Dārī رضي الله عنه narrates that he heard the Blessed Prophet ﷺ prohibit women from wearing men’s hats and shoes, from attending men’s gatherings and from wearing men’s trousers and shirts.⁸⁴

Umm Salama رضي الله عنها said she was sitting with a shawl tied on her head when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ came in and said, “The shawl should be wrapped around you [and on the head], it should not be tied just on top of the head as men do.”⁸⁵

Abū Huraira رضي الله عنه narrates that once a transgender, who had colored his hands and feet with henna, was brought before the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked who he was. People informed him that he imitates women. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ ordered that he be exiled from Madina.⁸⁶

Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ cursed the men who adopt the looks of women and become transgender and the

82 Abū Dāwūd, *fī Libās al-Nisā’* | Shu‘b al-Īmān, 6/167

83 Baihaqī, *al-Rajul Yattakhidhu al-Ghulām*

84 Kashf al-Ghumma

85 Abū Dāwūd, *fī al-Ikhtimār*

86 Abū Dāwūd, *fī al-Ḥukm fī al-Mukhannithin*

women who adopt the appearance of men; and then he asked us to throw them out of our homes.⁸⁷

It is clear from the above hadith that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ loathed and cursed the men who wear ladies' clothes and behave effeminately and likewise the women who wear men's clothes and behave like men.

It is only natural that men should look and behave like men just as women should look and behave like women. But today, we choose to ignore the advice of our beloved Prophet ﷺ and are enamored by the western designers, blindly adopt their modes of fashion and attire, and look upon ourselves as modern and nouveau though it may invite the curse and wrath of Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ grant us the wisdom and courage to follow the guidance of His beloved Prophet ﷺ. Whatever Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ have prescribed for us [in the Qur'an and Sunna] is solely for our own benefit.



COMMANDMENTS ABOUT DRESS

It seems appropriate at this point to briefly explain the commandments of Shari'a about the dress for men and women and to show how much Islam abhors nudity since it is also related to hijab.

The Shari'a requires men and women to cover certain parts of the body which is known as *satr*. After *īmān*, the first obligation upon a Muslim is to cover these parts of his/her body. Covering certain parts of the body is a primordial injunction which was promulgated in the Shari'a of all the prophets. Even before man came upon this earth, when Allah ﷻ removed the dress of Paradise from Ādam ﷺ and Hawwā ﷻ both of them covered their *satr* with leaves after they tasted the fruit of the forbidden tree. Thus, it is understood that covering the private parts constitutes a basic part of human nature.

Covering the *satr* has been obligatory in the Shari'a of all prophets from Ādam ﷺ to our Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Though there may have been slight differences in how much constituted the *satr*, it is unanimously agreed upon that covering certain parts of the body has been a part of the Shari'a of all the prophets. Every man and woman is obliged to cover the *satr* regardless of whether he is being watched or not. Thus, all jurists agree that if a person is offering his *ṣalāt* in the nude on a

87 Bukhārī, *al-Mutashabbihīna bi al-Nisā*

dark night where no one can see him, his ṣalāt is invalid. Similarly, if one is offering salat in a place where nobody is watching and the satr is exposed during ṣalāt, the ṣalāt becomes invalid.

a Prohibition of Nudity and Requirement of Satr

In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ states that clothes are a blessing and that they serve the purpose of covering the parts of the human body which any person dislikes being exposed. Nudity is condemned in many aḥādīth also.

٢٢ . عن ابن عمر رضی اللہ عنہ أن رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم
قال إياکم والتعری فإن معکم من لا یفارقکم إلا عند الغائط وحين یفصی
الرجل إلى أهله فاستحیوهم وأکرموهم

Ibn 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہما narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "Stay away from nudity because they [angels] are always with you who separate from you only when you relieve yourself or when a man has relations with his wife. So, be shy of them and respect them."⁸⁸

In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "I prefer falling from the sky and breaking into two pieces than to look at anyone's satr or to have someone look at mine."⁸⁹

Abū Sa'īd Khudrī رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "No man should look at the satr of another man and no woman at the satr of another woman. Also, no man should be with another man under one piece of cloth and no woman should be with another woman under one piece of cloth."⁹⁰

Bahz ibn Ḥakīm narrates that his grandfather asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, "O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! From whom should we and should we not cover the satr?" He replied, "Protect your satr from everyone except your wife and your slave-women." I asked, "O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! Should men cover from other

88 Tirmidhī, *al-Istīṭār 'Ind al-Jimā'*

89 al-Mabṣūṭ, 10/268

90 Muslim, *Taḥrīm al-Naẓr ila al-'Aurāt*

men?” He replied, “Nobody should be able to see your satr as much as possible.” I asked, “O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! Sometimes a person is alone.” He replied, “Allah is more deserving that you be shy of Him.”⁹¹

Jabbar ibn Sakhr states in a hadith that, “We have been forbidden from showing our satr.”⁹²

Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه reported that he was told not to walk around naked exposing the satr.⁹³

Once, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ passed by the place where camels grazed and which were given as *ṣadaqa*. He saw the shepherd lying naked in the sun. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ immediately dismissed him and said, “No shameless person should work for us.”⁹⁴

Once, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was going somewhere when he saw a servant taking a bath out in the open, completely naked. He said to him, “I don’t find you shy of Allah ﷻ. Consider yourself dismissed. We don’t need your service.”⁹⁵

Nudity is so abhorred in Islam that even a husband and wife, while having intercourse are instructed to observe the satr and not to be completely naked like donkeys.⁹⁶

It should be kept in mind that satr for a man begins from his navel to immediately below his knees. The satr for women in front of a man is the entire body with the exception of her face, palms and feet, and from her navel to immediately below her knees in front of another woman.

b Type of Clothing

The Shari‘a does not stipulate any specific type of clothing for the believers. People may choose what to wear taking into account the climate [of the area they live in] and other such [personal] issues. However, Islam does lay down certain conditions for an Islamic dress code as follows:

91 Tirmidhī, *Hifẓ al-‘Aurat*

92 al-Zawājir

93 al-Zawājir

94 al-Mabṣūt, 10/268

95 al-Zawājir

96 Ibn Māja, *al-Tasattur ‘Ind al-Jimā‘*

- i The clothes should cover the satr completely.
- ii They should not be transparent as such that the body is exposed.
- iii They should not be so tight-fitting as to expose the contours of the body. Instead of covering the satr and maintaining self-dignity, tight clothing actually excites the sexual desire and is a way of exposing the body.
- iv Men cannot wear silk. Silk is not agreeable with the nature of men and is more befitting for women.
- v Men and women should not wear clothes of the opposite sex.

c Tight and See-Through Clothes

Any dress made of such materials which show the contours of the body is sexually more exciting than if one is naked. This is why wearing clothes made of such materials is strictly prohibited in Islam.

٢٣ . عن ابن أسامة بن زيد أن أباه أسامة رضى الله عنه قال كساني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قبطية كثيفة كانت مما أهداها دحية الكلبي فكسوتها إمرأتي فقال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مالك لم تلبس القبطية قلت يا رسول الله كسوتها إمرأتي فقال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مرها فلتجعل تحتها غلالة إني أخاف أن تصف حجم عظامها

Usāma ibn Zaid's son narrates that his father Usāma رضي الله عنه said the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave me a relatively thick piece of material known as *qubṭī* which was presented to him by Dihya al-Kalbī رضي الله عنه. I gave that material to my wife for her clothes. The Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked me, "How come you did not wear the *qubṭī* cloth?" I replied, "O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم! I gave it to my wife for her dress." He said, "Ask her to make a lining for it; I am afraid [because of its thickness] it may define the frame of her body."⁹⁷

97 Aḥmad, 5/205 | al-Baihaqī, 2/234

‘Ā’isha ؓ says,

Once, my sister Asmā’ ؓ came to visit me. She was wearing a dress made of a thin Syrian material which you now call *saffāq*. When the Blessed Prophet ﷺ saw her, he said, “These are the kinds of clothes which have been prohibited in Sūrat al-Nūr [because they show your beauty].” He then asked Asmā’ ؓ to change into something different. I asked him, “O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! When you saw my sister, you said such and such.” He replied, “‘Ā’isha, when a girl reaches adulthood, she should not expose any part of her body except her face and palms.”⁹⁸

Dihyā al-Kalbī ؓ narrates,

Once the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was presented with a thin material from Egypt called *qubṭī*. He gave me a piece of it and said, “Make a shirt for yourself from this and give the rest to your wife to make her scarf, but ask her to put lining underneath it so that her body is not exposed.”⁹⁹

Once, ‘Ā’ishā’s ؓ niece, Ḥafsa bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, came to visit her. She was wearing a scarf made of thin material. ‘Ā’isha ؓ took the scarf and ripped it and instead gave her one of her own scarves made of thicker material.¹⁰⁰

On another occasion, some women from the tribe of Banū Tamīm came to visit ‘Ā’isha ؓ. They were wearing dresses made of thin material. ‘Ā’isha ؓ saw them and said, “If you are believers, then this is not the dress of believing women; but, if you are not believers, then do as you please.”¹⁰¹

Abū Huraira ؓ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ once said, “Two kinds of people will be in the worst situation in the Hellfire. First, the officials who carried whips like the tails of cows with them and used them on people. Second, are the women who are naked though they are clothed [due to wearing

98 al-Baihaqī, *‘Aurat al-Mar’at al-Hurra*

99 Abū Dāwūd, *fī Lubs al-Qubāṭīyy li al-Nisā*

100 al-Muwaṭṭa’, *Mā Yukrahu li al-Nisā*

101 Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

see-through and tight clothes]; they attract strangers [men] toward themselves and are attracted to them. Their heads will be hanging on a side like the humps of *bukhtī* camels. They will neither enter Paradise nor smell its fragrance though its fragrance will spread far and wide.”¹⁰²

In another hadith, Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “In the last times of my Umma, women will be naked though they are wearing clothes; their heads [due to the style of their hairdos] will look like the humps of slim *bukhtī* camels. [If you see them] curse them because they will be deprived of the mercy of Allah ﷻ. If there were another nation after you, they will be their servants as the women of the previous nation served you.”¹⁰³



TOUCHING NON-MAḤRAM WOMEN

It is more forbidden to touch a non-maḥram than to look at her, because, in touching her, the chances of fitna are much greater.

٢٤ . عن معقل بن يسار رضى الله عنه عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لأن يطعن فى رأس أحدكم بمخيط من حديد خير له من أن يمس امرأة لا تحل له

Ma‘qal ibn Yasār رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “It is better that a steel awl is driven into your head than for you to touch a woman who is not permissible for you.”¹⁰⁴

In another hadith the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “A man who touches a woman who is not permissible for him in any way, will have a burning coal placed on his palm on the Day of Judgement.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Muslim, *al-Nisā al-Kāsiyāt al-‘Āriyāt*

¹⁰³ al-Baihaqī, *al-Targhīb fī an Takthufa Thiyābuhā*

¹⁰⁴ al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr, 20/211

¹⁰⁵ al-Mabṣūṭ, 10/264

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Keep yourself from visiting a non-maḥram woman alone. I swear by the One who has my life in His hand, when a man visits a [non-maḥram] woman alone, Satan is always between them. It is better for any one of you to be completely covered with mud and then to collide with a pig [which is essentially impure like cow dung] rather than to rub your shoulder with the shoulder of a woman who is not permissible for you.”¹⁰⁶



DESCRIBING OTHER WOMEN'S ATTRIBUTES TO ONE'S HUSBAND

Describing another woman's looks may produce undesirable thoughts and sometimes lead to a secret attraction and desire for the woman described. Therefore, the Shari'a prohibits women from describing other women's attributes to their husbands:

٢٥ . عن ابن مسعود رضى الله عنه قال قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تبأشر المرأة المرأة فتتعتها لزوجها كأنه ينظر إليها

'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “A woman should not come face to face with another woman and then describe her to her husband in a way as if he is looking at her.”¹⁰⁷

Mullā 'Alī Qārī writes that the scholars of Islam deduce from this hadith that the description of something is the same as seeing it. Thus, when a wife describes another woman to her husband, it is as if she allows him to see the woman with his own eyes, which can arouse her husband's desire and even lead him to unlawful relations.

The above hadith warns us that even fantasizing and imagining the looks of a non-maḥram woman is forbidden in the Shari'a. In one hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “A man who imagines the body of

¹⁰⁶ al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr. 8/205

¹⁰⁷ Bukhārī, *lā Tubāshir al-Mar'atu*

a woman under her clothes to the extent that he visualizes her shape will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise.”¹⁰⁸



WOMEN PROHIBITED FROM WEARING JEWELRY WHICH PRODUCES SOUND

In the same way that a woman's body excites the sexual desires of men, likewise, listening to a woman's voice and the sound produced by her jewelry [can] also arouse men's desires. We previously discussed how a woman should speak to non-maḥram men in the explanation of certain ayas of the Qur'an.

٢٦ . عن بنانة مولاة عبدالرحمن ابن حسان الأنصاري عن عائشة رضى
الله عنها قالت بينما هي عندها إذ دخل عليها بجارية وعليها جلاجل
يصوتن فقالت لا تدخلنها على إلا أن تقطعوا جلاجلها وقالت سمعت
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول لا تدخل الملائكة بيتا فيه جرس

Bunāna رضي الله عنها narrates that once when she was with 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها, a woman came with a young girl to visit her. The girl was wearing anklets that jingled. 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها told the woman, “Do not bring the girl inside the house until she removes the anklets. I have heard from the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the angels of mercy do not enter the house where bells ring.”¹⁰⁹

Abū 'Amāma رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Allah تعالى dislikes the sound of a jingling anklet as much as He dislikes singing; and Allah تعالى will punish the singer and the one who listens to music; and jingling anklets can only be worn by the woman who is away from the Mercy of Allah تعالى.”¹¹⁰

108 al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq, *Faṣl fi al-Naẓr wa al-Lams*

109 Abū Dāwūd, *Mā Jā' fi al-Jalājil* | Aḥmad, 43/174

110 Kanz al-'Ummāl, 16/393

In Chapter One, which discusses the proofs from the Qur'an, it has been mentioned that women should not strike their feet so hard while walking that non-maḥram men hear the jingle of their jewelry. And in the above hadith, such jewelry is declared undesirable and prohibited. Imagine, if it is forbidden for men to hear the jingles of women's jewelry, then how much more severe is it for a woman to come before non-maḥram men or to talk to them?



ENTERING SOMEONE'S HOUSE WITHOUT PERMISSION IS FORBIDDEN

People live and dress freely and openly in their own homes as no strangers are around at that time. This is why the Shari'a orders that no one should enter anyone else's home without permission:

٢٧ . عن عطاء بن يسار أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سأله رجل فقال يارسول الله أستأذن على أمي فقال نعم قال الرجل إني معها في البيت فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إستأذن عليها فقال الرجل إني خادمها فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إستأذن عليها أتحب أن تراها عريانة قال لا قال فاستأذن عليها

'Aṭā ibn Yasār رضي الله عنه narrates that once someone asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, "O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! Do I need to take permission even from my mother before entering?" He replied, "Yes." The man asked, "O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! I live alone with her." He replied, "Ask for her permission." The man said, "But, I serve her." The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, "Ask your mother for permission. Do you wish to see her in the nude?" The man replied, "No." He said, "Then ask for her permission."¹¹¹

If taking permission from the mother is necessary, then it is even more

111 al-Muwaṭṭaʿ, *al-Isti'dhān* | al-Baihaqī, *Isti'dhān al-Mamlūk*

important to take permission before entering other people's homes. In fact, taking permission before entering someone's home is conducive to maintaining the hijab. If anyone could march into another's home without prior notice, then how will the hijab be established? This is why the aḥādīth are clear in this matter [that permission must be taken before entering].

‘Abd Allāh ibn Basar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “When a person goes to visit someone, he should not stand in front of the door, but to the right or left of it.”¹¹²

Obviously, if one stands in front of the door, he can see inside the house when the door is opened and this is prohibited.

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “The person who peeks inside the house before being granted permission to come in did not ask for permission.”¹¹³

The significance of this order is understood in the next hadith. Abū Huraira رضي الله عنه narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “You have not sinned if someone peeks inside your house without permission and you hit him with a stone that injures his eye.”¹¹⁴

Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه narrates that once a bedouin came to visit the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and peeked into his house from a hole in the door. When the Blessed Prophet ﷺ saw him, he picked up an iron rod or a wood stick and thrust it towards the hole to poke it in his eye. When the bedouin saw this he withdrew back. He told him, “If you had not moved back, I would have injured your eye.”¹¹⁵

Sahal ibn Sa’d رضي الله عنه narrates that once the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was in his house combing his hair [with an iron instrument] when someone came and peeked through the hole in the door. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Had I known before that you were peeking, I would have struck your eye with it.” The condition of asking for permission before entering someone's home is so that no one looks inside.¹¹⁶



112 Abū Dāwūd, *Kam Marratin Yusallimu al-Rajul*

113 Abū Dāwūd, *fi al-Isti'dhān*

114 Bukhārī, *Man Akhadha Ḥaqqahū*

115 Nisā'ī, *Dhikr Ḥadīth 'Amr ibn Ḥazm fi al-'Uqūl*

116 Muslim, *Taḥrīm al-Naẓr fi Bait Ghairihī*



Chapter 3

COMMANDMENTS OF HIJAB



THE ISLAMIC WAY OF PREVENTING LEWDNESS AND SHAMELESSNESS

AFTER DISCUSSION of evidences from Qur'an and hadith, it seems appropriate to present a bird's eye view of all the commandments of Islam about hijab and the system it advocates for the prevention of shamelessness in society. In his explanation of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, Mufti Muḥammad Shafi' writes:

Shamelessness, immorality, adultery and all that is conducive to it are amongst the dangerous evils which destroy not only its perpetrators but also families, communities, and, at times, great nations. A thorough investigation behind many of the murders and other heinous crimes today reveals a trail of lust and women. This is why no nation, no religion, and no region of this world has ever disagreed about the evils of shamelessness and immorality.

In this last era, Western societies have rebelled against their own religious values and traditions to promote sexual freedom. They have plunged their societies and civilizations into a sexual anarchy where everyone is invited to engage in indecency and immorality. However,

they could not ignore the dangerous consequences of such freedom and had to declare prostitution, rape, and public sex, as crimes. This is like somebody who lights and fuels a fire in a forest and then worries about how to control the flames. Or, like someone who puts his pot on a burning fire and then tries to stop it from boiling over.

On the contrary, Islam not only declares such harmful and criminal activities as severely punishable, but it also regulates and prohibits any other related activities which may lead to these heinous crimes. For example, to fulfill the objective of protecting societies against rape, adultery, and immorality, the regulations began with asking people to lower their gaze and to stop free and unchecked intermingling of the sexes. Then it asked women to stay in their homes and to cover themselves completely when they come out, to walk on the sides of street, and not to wear perfumes or trinkets that make sound. And for those indifferent to these restrictions, it prescribed such severe punishments that serve as a lesson and deterrent for the rest of society.

In order to justify their shamelessness, the West and its counterparts put forward a number of arguments about how keeping women in hijab is psychologically, socially, and economically destructive. Many contemporary scholars have countered these arguments in detail. For our purpose here, it is sufficient to understand that even lesser crimes like stealing, robbing, and embezzlement, carry some benefits but if the repercussions of shamelessness were to be seen, they would condemn it unconditionally. Even if there was social and economical benefit in bringing women out of hijab, no sane person would deem it beneficial if [it was known] that it abetted in undoing the moral fabric of society and spawned the type of widespread immorality that cripples an entire nation.



CUTTING OFF THE MEANS—

THE GOLDEN PRINCIPLE OF PREVENTING EVIL

Just as belief in the oneness of Allah ﷻ, the prophets, and Day of Judgment, were central to and common to all the Shari'as brought by the prophets, likewise; every Shari'a agreed that transgression, sins, and lewdness were categorically forbidden. The previous religions never forbid the means until they became an accessory to a crime. How-

ever, since the Shari‘a brought by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was to remain in effect until the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ preserved it by forbidding all such means which, left to their potentialities, may lead to wrongful, indecent, and criminal activities. For example, where drinking alcohol was declared forbidden, so was making, selling, and even serving it. Likewise, all activities that are a vehicle for usury [interest] are also forbidden. Thus, the jurists declare all profits gained through such activities as unlawful. Idol-worship and associating deities with Allah ﷻ are a major and unpardonable sin in Islam. Therefore, all the channels that lead to associating with Allah ﷻ are also condemned. For example, the polytheists worshipped the sun at the time of sunrise, sunset and at midday; therefore, it was forbidden for Muslims to pray their ṣalāt during these times to avoid resemblance with the polytheists. Also, drawing pictures and making idols also served as a means to idol-worship; therefore, they also were prohibited.

In the same way, when the Shari‘a prohibited out-of-wedlock sex and adultery, it also prohibited all the avenues that lead to it. For example, it is clear from the aḥādīth that to look at a non-maḥram of the opposite sex with lust was declared an adultery of the eyes; to hear them, adultery of the ears; to touch them, adultery of the hands; and to walk towards them, adultery of the feet.

However, the scope of potential causes and means to sin is so broad that, had they all been prohibited, life would be straitened and every movement restricted, which is against the nature of the Shari‘a. The Qur’an openly declares:

وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

...and did not impose any hardship on you in the religion...¹

This is why the restrictions on the causes and means of forbidden acts are classified as follows:

- 1 The means which are so close to sin that they would most likely lead a person to it are forbidden.
- 2 The means which are remotely connected to a sin and may not necessarily lead to it are undesirable [*makrūh*].

1 22:78

- 3 Any means which bear no direct relation with a sin and rarely lead a person to it are in the category of permissible acts [*mubāḥāt*].

The example of one [1] is buying and selling liquor. It is forbidden because it is closely associated with drinking alcohol. Similarly, touching a non-maḥram woman with lust is not adultery but it is forbidden on the basis that the likelihood is that it will lead to adultery.

The example of two [2] is selling grapes to a wine-maker who admits to buying them to make wine. Selling grapes is not forbidden but in this case it will be undesirable. Similarly, renting a building to open a bank or a theater or any other forbidden activity would also fall in the category of undesirable.

The example of three [3] is selling grapes to the public. Though it is certainly possible that someone is buying the grapes to make wine, but as the seller does not have foreknowledge of it, his business is permissible.

It is also important to remember that if the Shari‘a declares any mean or cause of a sin as forbidden, it remains forbidden regardless of whether it is a cause of sin or not in any given situation. In that case, to contest its prohibition is also forbidden.

The hijab for women is also based on the same principle of cutting-off-the-means, as not observing it is likely to lead to other sins. The above three principles will apply here as well. For example, uncovering the body in front of a non-maḥram is forbidden because of the likelihood of it leading to sin. Though it may not lead to sin every time, it is absolutely forbidden except when it is required for medical reasons. Also, the ruling of impermissibility cannot be changed due to circumstances or the times. It was forbidden in the beginning of Islam and continues to be forbidden to this day.

An example of the second and third principle in this regard is the example of women leaving their homes covered with ‘abāya or wrapped in a long cover-all. If coming out with ‘abāya leads to fitna, it will be undesirable. But if there is no likelihood of fitna, it is permissible. Thus, the ruling about this matter may change depending upon the circumstances. In the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the likelihood of women coming out of their homes being a cause of fitna was little. Therefore, he allowed them to come to the maṣjid wearing an ‘abāya or a cover-all. Though he persuaded them to offer their ṣalāt in their

homes [as it was more rewarding for them to do so], he did not stop them from coming to the masjid since there was no likelihood of fitna at that time. After the Blessed Prophet ﷺ passed away, when the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ saw changes in the times and saw that it was no longer safe for women to come to the masjid, even if they came wearing an ‘abāya, they agreed to request them not to come to the masjid anymore. ‘Ā’isha ﷺ once said that if the Blessed Prophet ﷺ had witnessed the present times, he would have barred women from going to the masjid. This proves that the step taken by the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ was not any different than what the Blessed Prophet ﷺ might have done. Since the conditions under which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ permitted women to come to the masjid were no longer met, the ruling in this matter also changed.



THE HISTORY OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF HIJAB

Never in the history of mankind, from the time of Ādam ﷺ to our Blessed Prophet ﷺ, was free mixing of men and women an acceptable practice. Aside from the Shari‘a of the prophets, even honorable families [from anywhere in the world] never tolerated free-mixing.

When Mūsā ﷺ travelled to Madyan, we read [in the Qur’an] that the women were standing away from the well waiting to draw water for their sheep because they felt uncomfortable standing in the crowd of men.

The first aya of hijab was revealed on the occasion of the wedding of Zainab bint Jaḥsh ﷺ. Even before the revelation of this aya, it is narrated that she sat in her house facing the wall [with her back to the men]:

وهي مولىة وجهها إلى الحائط

*she was with her face to the wall.*²

This hadith proves that intermingling between men and women was not custom amongst the noble families [in Arabia] even before the first aya of hijab was revealed. And where the Qur’an talks about

² Tirmidhī, *Sūrat al-Aḥzāb*

promiscuous women in the times of Jāhiliyya, it refers to slavegirls and prostitutes who were the only ones involved in such acts. The noble Arab families rejected such indecent behavior and this is confirmed by the history of the Arabs.

In India, the Hindus, Buddhists, and other idol-worshippers, also denounced free-mixing of men and women. It was only after western societies became iconoclastic that they brought their women out to work, to school, clubs and parties, and to freely mix with men in all aspects of their lives.

The reality is that women are not only physically different from men but Allah ﷻ has also blessed women with a natural sense of modesty and decency, something which can only be preserved by separating and veiling them from men. This natural tendency to protect their honor and modesty is an inborn trait of womenkind from the beginning of mankind. Thus, hijab was being observed in some form or other in the early days of Islam also.

The specific requirements of hijab to stay home and to come out only when necessary, covering the entire body, were revealed in the 5th year of Hijra in Madina. The scholars are unanimous that the first aya about hijab,

لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ

...do not enter the houses of the Prophet...³

was revealed on the occasion of Zainab's ﷺ wedding to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ which occurred in the 5th year of Hijra. Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar in *al-Iṣāba* and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr in *al-Istī'āb* mention that the wedding took place in either the 3rd or 5th year of Hijra. However, 'Allāma Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Sa'd both agree that it took place in 5th year of Hijra. 'Ā'isha's ﷺ narrations also seem to confirm this date. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

In the above aya, women are instructed to observe hijab while men are told that if they need to ask something from a non-maḥram, they should ask from behind a curtain. Thus, the aya stresses keeping men and women apart and that if such a need arises, men should talk from behind a curtain.

3 33:53

As mentioned previously, all scholars agree that,

لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ

do not enter the houses of the Prophet unless you are given permission.

was the first aya revealed on hijab. The three ayas of Sūrat al-Nūr and the beginning aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb *wa qarna fi buyūtikunna*, in which the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ are ordered to remain in their homes, were revealed after the above aya, although they appear earlier in the order of the Qur'an. This is proven in the first ayas of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb where Allah ﷻ gave the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ the option between opting for divorce and gaining the fruits of this world, or to live with him and remain in poverty. In the explanation of this aya, it should be noted that Zainab bint Jahsh ؓ was also included in this address. Therefore, we know that Zainab ؓ was already married to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ at the time, and that this aya was revealed sometime after her marriage. Similarly, the three ayas of Sūrat al-Nūr which clarify the rulings of hijab also appear earlier on in the order of the Qur'an though they were revealed sometime later during the Battle of Banī al-Muṣṭalaq and the event of *Ifk*, both of which took place in the 6th year of Hijra. The ruling on hijab was in effect from the time of the marriage of Zainab ؓ and the revelation of the aya of hijab.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIJAB AND SATR

The Shari'a requires men and women to cover the parts of the body which are known as 'aura in Arabic or satr in Persian and Urdu. After imān, the first obligation upon a Muslim is to cover these parts of his/her body. It is a primordial obligation that continued throughout the Shari'a of every prophet. Before man came upon this earth, [the story is narrated in Qur'an that] Allah ﷻ removed the dress of Paradise from Ādam ؑ and Ḥawwā ؑ [due to their disobeying the order of Allah ﷻ] because of which both of them covered their satr with leaves. Allah ﷻ says:

وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ

Thus, this aya indicates that covering the private parts is inherent to the nature of man.

In every Shari'a, from Ādam ﷺ to the last of the prophets, Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ, covering the satr was obligatory. There may have been slight differences in how much of each part constituted the satr but a consensus is established that covering certain parts of the body was a part of the Shari'a of every prophet. Every man and woman is obligated to follow this command regardless of whether someone is watching him or not. Thus, if a person is offering his ṣalāt in the nude on a dark night where there is no one to watch him, his salat is invalid in the opinion of all the jurists. Similarly, if one is offering his salat where no one can see him and his satr becomes exposed during the salat, the ṣalāt will be invalidated.

Everyone agrees about covering the satr in front of others but even if one cannot be seen, it is forbidden to be naked without any physical or Shar'ī necessity.⁴

This is the ruling about satr which has been in effect in the Shari'a of all the prophets from the beginning of time and which is equally applicable to both men and women. Therefore, it is not permissible to be naked in front of others or even when alone unless out of necessity.

Regarding women observing hijab in front of non-maḥram men, at least one thing has always been true among the prophets, pious predecessors, and righteous people: they never approved of unchecked mixing between men and women. In the story about Shu'aib's ﷺ two daughters in the Qur'an, it is mentioned that they went to draw water for their sheep. When they saw a crowd of men by the well, they stood waiting on the side. When Mūsā ﷺ passed by them, he asked them why they were standing on the side. They made two points:

- 1 There is a crowd of men by the well. We are waiting for them to leave before we draw water for our sheep.
- 2 Our father is old [i.e. it is not the job of women to leave the home and draw water for the sheep but as no else is available to do the work, we must do it ourselves].

4 al-Baḥr | Sharḥ al-Munya

The above story clearly illustrates that even during that time, their Shari‘a discouraged mixing of men and women and also that women were not expected to take responsibilities which brought them together with men. It seems [from the ayas] that women were not required to observe hijab in those days as was the case in the early days of Islam. The order was revealed in the 3rd or 5th year of Hijra that women must observe hijab in front of non-maḥram men.

The above discussion clarifies that the satr and hijab for women are two separate injunctions. Covering the satr has always been obligatory, whereas hijab for women became obligatory in the 5th year of Hijra. Satr is obligatory on both men and women while hijab is only required of women. Satr is obligatory whether one is alone or with others, while hijab is obligatory only in the presence of non-maḥram men. A lack of distinction between these two concepts often leads to doubts, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the ayas of the Qur’an. For example, the face and the palms of a woman are clearly exempted from the satr. Therefore, ṣalāt is permissible for a woman without covering her face and palms. The jurists also exempt the feet of a woman from the satr based on the same principle.



THE CATEGORIES OF HIJAB AND THEIR COMMANDMENTS

From the seven ayas of the Qur’an and numerous aḥādīth about the hijab, the primary objective is to conceal women, their activities, and movements, from men. This is only possible by having them stay within the four walls of their homes and behind curtains. The other methods of observing hijab may be used, as required, based on one’s needs and circumstances.

Thus the first category of hijab, which is the prime objective of Shari‘a is for women to remain in their homes. But, Shari‘a is a comprehensive and complete system of life which makes concessions for every necessity. The Shari‘a provides for the need of women to come out of their homes through the second category of hijab. The second category, based on the Qur’an and Sunna, is that women cover themselves from head to toe with an ‘abāya or cloak with a veil that is cut to accommodate the eyes. The details of these categories of hijab are listed below.

First Category of Hijab—Remaining in Home

According to the Qur'an and Sunna, this is the main objective and primary type of hijab. The aya in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb,

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَاسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ

...And when you ask anything from them (the blessed wives of the Prophet), ask them from behind a curtain...⁵

is a clear evidence of this. This point is even more clear-cut in the previous aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ

Remain in your homes...⁶

The practice of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in this matter elucidates the correct meaning of this ayat even more.

As has been said before, the first aya of hijab was revealed at the time of Zainab's ﷺ marriage to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. In regards to the time of the revelation of this aya, Anas ﷺ narrates:

I know the occasion of the revelation of this aya better than anyone else as I was with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. When this aya was revealed, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ drew a curtain in his tent between Zainab ﷺ and the men present in the tent. He did not ask Zainab ﷺ to cover herself with an 'abāya or a sheet of cloth. The hadith of 'Umar ﷺ in this regard, which has been mentioned before, also makes the same point that the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ wives should remain in their homes away from the gaze of men, as is evident from these words: "All kinds of good and bad people come to visit you."

5 33:53

6 33:33

In Bukhārī, ‘Ā’isha ؓ narrates about the Battle of Mu’ta:

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ was in Masjid al-Nabawī when he received the news that Zaid ibn Hāritha, Ja’far and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Rawāḥa ؓ were martyred. The signs of grief and sadness were evident on his face. I was watching the whole event from an opening in the door.

It is clear that ‘Ā’isha ؓ did not come out in an ‘abāya to sit with the men even on such a sad occasion. Instead, she observed the whole incident from an opening in the door of her house.

In Bukhārī, in the Book of Battles, under the chapter of ‘Umrat al-Qaḍā, it is mentioned that ‘Urwa ibn Zubair ؓ, ‘Ā’ishā’s ؓ nephew, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ؓ were sitting outside of ‘Ā’isha’s ؓ house discussing the ‘umras of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates:

As we talked, we heard ‘Ā’isha ؓ brushing her teeth and cleaning her throat.

This also suggests that, after the revelation of the aya of hijab, it became the practice of the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to observe hijab by staying in their homes.

Similarly, in another hadith of Bukhārī, it is narrated about the Battle of Ṭā’if that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ rinsed his mouth in a pot and gave the water to Abū Mūsā ؓ and Bilāl ؓ to drink and to rub on their faces. The Mother of the Believers, Umm Salama ؓ was watching this from behind a curtain. She asked the two Ṣaḥāba ؓ to leave some of the water for her also.

This hadith indicates that the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ stayed in their homes and behind the curtains after the aya of hijab was revealed.

In Bukhārī, the Book of *Adab*, Anas ؓ narrates that he and Abū Ṭalḥa ؓ were once going somewhere with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ was riding a camel and the mother of the believers Ṣafiyya ؓ sat behind him. On the way, his camel suddenly slipped and they both fell. Abū Ṭalḥa ؓ jumped from his camel and said, “O Allah’s messenger! May I be sacrificed for you, are you hurt?” The Blessed

Prophet ﷺ said, “No, take care of the lady.” So, Abū Ṭalḥa ﷺ covered his face with a garment and went to Ṣafiyya ﷺ and draped it over her. Then he prepared the mount for both to ride on.

In the above incident, the precautionary measures taken to observe hijab with the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, even in the event of an accident, indicates the importance of hijab.

In Tirmidhī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

فاذا خرجت المرأة إستشرفها الشيطان

Indeed when she leaves her home, Satan keeps an eye on her.

Ibn Khuzaima and Ibn Ḥabbān, in their narration of the above hadith, add the following words:

أقرب ما تكون من وجه ربها وهي في قعر بيتها

“A woman is closest to her Creator when she is concealed in her home.”⁷

This hadith also confirms that women should remain in their homes unless it is necessary for them to come out.

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

ليس للنساء نصيب في الخروج إلا مضطرة

“Women should not come out of their homes except under a dire necessity.”⁸

‘Alī ﷺ narrates: “Once I was in the presence of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ when he asked the Ṣaḥāba ﷺ:

7 Ibn Khuzaima, *Ikhtiyār Ṣalāt al-Mar’a* | Ibn Ḥabbān, *al-Ḥaḍar wa al-Ibāḥa*

8 Kanz ‘Ummāl, 16/ 391

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ خَيْرٌ لِلْمَرْأَةِ

What is better for women?

No one responded. The Ṣaḥāba رضي الله عنهم remained silent. When I went home and asked Fāṭima رضي الله عنها the same question, she replied:

لَا يَرِينِ الرَّجَالُ وَلَا يَرُونَهَا

It is better for women that they don't look at men, nor be looked at by men.

I repeated her answer to the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He said:

(صَدَقَتْ) إِنَّمَا فَاطِمَةُ بَضْعَةٌ مِنِّي

[She responded correctly], indeed she is a part of me.”⁹

In the hadith of *Ifk*, ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها was left in the desert because the hijab of the wives of the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not limited to ‘abāya or an enwrapping sheet. Even the palanquin which they sat in when traveling was a form of hijab. It was lifted and secured upon a camel and brought down [as necessary]. The palanquin was like a [mobile] home for traveling women. In this incident, when the caravan was ready to move on, the servants lifted the palanquin and mounted it on the back of the camel assuming that ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها was sitting inside though she was not. She had left the caravan out of necessity. Thus, the caravan departed and she was left alone in the desert.

This incident also confirms that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his wives interpreted the rule of hijab for women as staying in their homes, and if while traveling, in the palanquin, to avoid men. If they were so vigilant about observing hijab while on journey, then how careful must they have been about it at home?

9 *Kanz ‘Ummāl*, 16/602

Second Category of Hijab—‘Abaya

When a woman is to come out of the house out of necessity, she is required to wear an ‘abāya or wrap herself in a long sheet of cloth that covers her from head to toe and does not reveal any part of her body. This is confirmed by the following aya of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِرِزْوَانِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ

*O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them...*¹⁰

As mentioned previously, the jilbāb is a cloak or long sheet of cloth which covers a person from head to toe.

Ibn Jarīr narrates from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه that the jilbāb should be worn in a way that it covers a woman from head to toe, including her face, only leaving an opening around one eye to see the road. The full explanation of this aya is given in Chapter One. The purpose here is to show that a woman is required to observe the second category of hijab when she comes out of her home out of necessity.

It is permissible for women to observe this category of hijab out of necessity so long as they adhere to certain conditions which are mentioned in the authentic aḥādīth. The conditions are:

- 1 She must not wear perfumes,
- 2 She must not wear jewelry that jingles,
- 3 She should walk on the sides of the street,
- 4 She should not enter in crowds of men.

It is narrated in a hadith that once Bilāl رضي الله عنه or Anas رضي الله عنه went to bring Fāṭima’s رضي الله عنها baby to the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Fāṭima رضي الله عنها gave him the baby from behind a curtain despite the fact that both these men were close servants of the family and often visited them.

¹⁰ 33:53

After the revelation of the aya of hijab, curtains were hung in the houses of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ as well as other Muslim homes.¹¹

In summary, all four imams agree that it is not permissible for a woman to uncover her face in front of a non-maḥram. Three of the four imams say it is forbidden, while Imam Abū Ḥanīfa and his students say it is forbidden due to the possibility of fitna. Included in non-maḥram men are the husband's brother, the sister's husband, the husband of the husband's sister, and the uncle's and aunt's sons. Often these men are considered maḥram though the Blessed Prophet ﷺ unequivocally declared them as non-maḥram, as mentioned previously in Chapter Two.

The opportunities for fitna to arise from not covering the face is so evident that it needs no further elaboration. No household is free from such incidents of fitna but as people generally hide such incidents, they never become known. Even then, every now and then such incidents do make their way into the newspapers. I will mention a few such incidents as examples.

In one of his published speeches, Mufti Rashīd Aḥmad Ludhiānwī said:

Some people are under the misconception that there is no danger when hijab is not observed in their homes. They say, "*Māshā' Al-lāh*, our wives, daughters, sisters and daughters-in-law are very pious. They don't look at anything bad so how can they have any bad intentions in their hearts? Our brothers and other relatives, like the uncle's and aunt's sons, are from honorable families. We cannot even imagine such evils in our homes." As important as the issue is, people are that much more careless. Even learned scholars are careless in this regard. People ignore this injunction as if it was never revealed in the Qur'an.

I will narrate such incidents of families who thought they were pious. Like most of you, they began to take pride in their piety and rejected the commandment of Allah ﷻ by not observing hijab in their homes. What were the results? These are not stories of the past. These incidents occurred recently here in Karachi. If it was not for keeping the honor of their families, I would have told you their names and addresses so that you could

11 Dars al-Qur'an

go and ask them and verify these incidents yourself. The truth is that they dishonored their families and themselves by violating the law of Allah ﷻ about hijab. Now listen to these stories. May they penetrate your hearts:

First Incident

There was a Haji Sahib who was pious and virtuous. People had such faith in his piety that they had entrusted him with millions of rupees worth of valuables. Once, some of his relatives came to me and told me this incident. He fell in love with his sister-in-law. His wife and in-laws all lived in the same house. He began having an affair with his sister-in-law. What did he do? He quietly obtained a passport and visa of a foreign country, shaved off his beard, put on a suit and absconded with all the wealth people had placed in his trust to the foreign country. Think about how people say that such a thing could never happen in their homes because of the religious environment in their homes. What can you say about such self-deceptions and vain hopes?

Second Incident

This also took place in Karachi. A religious man who actively participated in religious activities and who had the good fortune of performing hajj ended up having an affair with his sister-in-law simply because there was no tradition of observing hijab in his home. Their relationship continued for many years during which the woman took birth control pills until she was married and went to her husband's house.

Third Incident

A man who observed his ṣalāt and fasting regularly and whose wife was from a respectable family, did not observe hijab in their home. They often visited their friends' homes and their friends came to their house. Once, one of his friends led his wife on and they ended up having a relationship. While the man worked all day and the children were in schools, the wife was having fun with her husband's friend in the privacy of her own home. The husband found out about the affair after some time. He tried

his best to stop his wife but without much success and he finally divorced her.

I mentioned the above three incidents as examples. Otherwise, such incidents are happening everyday. It is clear that the beginning of such incidents is the lack of hijab in the homes which is the first step [towards fitna]. If hijab is observed meticulously, such evils can be prevented before they even begin.





Chapter 4

ANCIENT AND PRESENT AGE OF JĀHILIYYA

QARI MUḤAMMAD ṬAYYIB STATES:

The Qur'an refers to two periods in the history of mankind as the times of Jāhiliyya. One is the period between the coming of Nūḥ ﷺ and Idrīs ﷺ and the second period is that between the time of 'Īsā ﷺ and our Blessed Prophet ﷺ which is also defined as the period of *Fatra*. The women of these two periods exposed their bodies and abused the freedom to leave their homes to an extent unheard of before that time. As a result, they came to be regarded as exhibitable objects that can be enjoyed by all. They were no longer like the precious gems that are protected by their owners, but became public property that can be exploited by anyone at any time. They walked the streets, adorned with jewelry and perfumes, luring men with their promiscuousness as well as by flaunting their beauty and scantily-clad bodies. The frequent intermingling of women with men other than their husbands created a situation whereby it was possible for a woman to be her husband's and a lover's at the same time. Without any thought for their honor, respect, chastity and modesty, these women never hesitated to please men with anything they ever wanted from

a woman. It was such shamelessness and immoral acts of past nations which the Qur'an refers to as *tabarruj al-jāhiliyya*.

The shameless society we live in today, and more particularly, the West's hedonistic societies, have pushed far past the point to which past nations of the times of Jāhiliyya went in their lewdness and promiscuity. The revealing dresses and vanity and display of the women, along with the shameless and lewd behavior of the men in these societies, which have become the norm of society and labeled modern civilization, not only mimicks the age of Jāhiliyya but, in its excesses, surpasses it.

This is the same fitna molded in a new mold

Undoubtedly, the women of today enjoy equal rights and freedom. But, in reality, what else do these rights translate into except the freedom to leave their homes half-dressed and unhindered to wander in parks and other public places? She dresses provocatively in a way that draws special attention to the most alluring parts of her body and walks amorously to attract the attention of men around her. In this way, a single woman makes numerous boyfriends while the married woman creates a number of rivals for her husband. Married women openly meet and have fun with their male friends without permission from their husbands. In such instances, the law does not side with the husband as, legally, he has no right to interfere in his wife's personal life. This is because she is free in her own right to do as she pleases. What this means is that modern society is obligated not to defend and safeguard the moral values of a society but instead to facilitate and contribute to its immorality and moral decay.



SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF INDECENCY IN THE PRESENT DAY JĀHILIYYA

The consequences of legalizing indecency is that society has become accustomed to and increasingly accepting and supportive of lewdness. The Salvation Army [Europe office], a not-for-profit organization founded on the principle of helping the helpless and poor, is also

involved in helping unwed mothers during their pregnancy and delivery by providing them with maternity homes. In 1928, the Calcutta-based *Forward* magazine published the following excerpt from a New York magazine which reported some findings from a paper issued by the Salvation Army.

Twenty years ago, the majority of women availing themselves of the maternity home facilities were older, mature women who were well aware of the possible consequences of their immoral behavior. Now the situation has changed drastically. The vast majority of women who now come to these maternity homes are in fact young students and immature girls who should be worrying about their schools rather than preparing for motherhood. According to the latest statistics these young girls represent 42 percent of the population of these homes and their average age is only 16.¹

The above excerpts attests to the high numbers of unwanted pregnancies. This is despite the fact that numerous methods of birth control are now easily available and becoming pregnant by accident is almost impossible. The statistics in the above quote show that a very small number, perhaps one out of every couple of hundreds, of those who actually engage in illicit sexual activity find themselves in a maternity home. Despite prostitution being illegal in England and not included in the rights of women, one trustworthy source, a lady, writes:

In the three years from 1915 to 1917, over 20,000 women were arrested in London alone for prostitution. These were only the ones who were unlucky or stupid enough to get caught for, in fact, there are thousands more who have practiced this trade all their lives and have managed to elude the law.²

John Pull writes:

There are over 40,000 prostitutes in New York City, not counting those girls who use their homes, hotels and other public places to

1 Teachings of Islam and Christian Nations, July 13, 1925

2 Inqilāb, July 1, 1928 as quoted in Ta'limāt-e-Islam

carry on their trade. It has been calculated that one out of every ten women in New York is involved in such a trade and that an estimated 5,540,000 men avail themselves of their services during a year. In other words 15,180 men visit such women every day, many of whom suffer from sexually-transmitted diseases.³

The June 1935 edition of the magazine *Mahshar-e-Khayāl* stated that 30,000 women in London practiced prostitution with a legal license. Even if such women are visited by a minimum of five men a day, which is obviously a very conservative number, then 150,000 men a day and 54,750,000 a year openly commit legal adultery in the city of London alone.

In the city of Glasgow, young women announced that they would set up kissing stands to raise money for the college students of the city. Selling a kiss for six shillings each, these young women raised thousands of pounds.

In London, there are young women's associations whose members vow to never marry, but having affairs and illicit sexual relationships are not against their constitution.

Female students at one American university were asked in a survey to list the qualities and skills which were necessary for girls to have before entering universities for the first time. Over 200 girls responded. A summary of the results of this survey was published in the newspaper *Madina*.

Girls should be aware of what masculinity is and what femininity is and what are their characteristics and requisites. She should know how to dance, smoke, drink, and hug a member of the opposite sex. She should not indiscriminately respond to every male who appears interested in her; instead she should select her partners on the basis of her taste and interests. She should also know how to handle herself with someone who has been drinking or is coming on too strong and against her will. One girl's response was more specific. She believed that girls should have some experience beforehand in hugging and kissing men so as to prevent embarrassment due to inexperience when they go to university. Thus, they will have the ability to effectively handle themselves

3 Inqilāb, July 1, 1928 as quoted in *Tā'limāt-e-Islam*

with other male students, teachers, or staff of the university. Also she should know how to tactfully discourage physical overtures from those she does not like.⁴

An American scholar writes:

What is the purpose of our cinema, theater and the cars we drive? They teach us about crime and illicit relationships because of which we learn to steal, to run off with women. They aid in indecency and obscenity which has resulted in men losing their sense of honor and women losing their chastity. Family life is in ruins. Free women don't care for the men and men do not care for them. The best gift given to a friend or acquaintance is their wife or daughter and women enjoy and desire the lustful glances of men.

George Allen Endalon writes in his book *Civilization*:

Words of respect are uttered in praise of the qualities of chastity, modesty and honor but everyday life is devoted to the pursuit of adultery, fornication and syphilis.⁵

These same needs for sexual excitement led to the convening of international exhibitions in the west. Exhibitions of what commodity? No, not commercial items but rather beauty pageants to exhibit and judge women's bodies. The purpose of these beauty pageants is to select the most beautiful woman from the female representatives of different countries around the world. The winning country and province is then praised in glowing terms. Not only are there pageants to choose the most beautiful women, but also shows to choose the woman with the most beautiful body parts. Only recently there was a "most beautiful thighs" pageant to decide which of the young women competing had the most perfect thighs in terms of color, size, shape, etc. The winners of such shows are awarded prizes. One can easily estimate where the values of people are headed today.

4 Siyāsāt, Lahore, May 28, 1923

5 Ta'limāt-e-Islam, p. 105

The few examples and statistics presented above, which do not represent the entire west but only a few cities and only over a limited time frame [65 years ago], are sufficient to give the readers some inkling of the extent to which male and female intermingling and immodesty have sunk human beings to the level of animals. It also clearly demonstrates the extent to which people, who have denounced religion in favor of their own man-made laws and modernization, are losing the very characteristics which make them human. Sacrificing true happiness, mental peace and satisfaction, the doors of hell are being opened to swallow the entire human race.

This is the progressive and enlightened culture to which its avid, almost fanatical converts [our “enlightened” younger generation], are inviting us. Articles and columns opposing and misrepresenting hijab as defined by Shari‘a fill the pages of newspapers and magazines in order to ensure that Asia follows the West on the road to shamelessness and renounce hijab. It is sad to see we have become dumb, deaf and blind; our hearts have hardened to the truth, and our minds are indoctrinated. We have lost the ability to grasp the reality and enlightenment of Islam. The Shari‘a taught its followers the ways of modesty, purity, and faith, to save them from the morally destructive and deadly repercussions that follow after disregarding the hijab. Muslims are taught, not only to eschew the shameless and immodest behavior which characterizes both the first and second periods of Jāhiliyya, but also to avoid any similarity or resemblance to it. It is for this reason that Islam presented, against *tabarruj al-jāhiliyya*, a natural alternative of hijab, which fosters modesty and ensures positive outcomes. It not only protects the honor of the virtuous Muslim women but also guarantees material success, protection of human virtues, and national integrity.

It should be kept in mind that the above examples, which were taken from the book *Shar‘i Parda* by Qari Muḥammad Ṭayyib are from sixty years ago. Since then, the West has witnessed a manifold increase in indecency, lewdness, and corruption in their society. It is a phenomenon which the Western people themselves are well aware of, for it is they who have created the laws which legalize and protect such “rights” of its citizens. Countless incidents take place on a daily basis which illustrate this. One such event took place in the city of Kitchener, Canada, and was reported by the K.W. Record in its October 25th, 1988 edition:

A 40-year old Canadian immigrant of Chile lived in Canada with his 34 year old Chilean wife. One day, upon returning home he found his wife in bed with another man. He went to the police to report the incident and was told that they could not take any action as her actions were not against the law. He returned home, but once there, could not bear to simply do nothing; he called the police again. Two police officers soon arrived, apprised themselves of the situation and informed him that they could not do anything. They advised him to go to sleep on the sofa in the other room and left. Unable to control his emotions any longer, the husband picked up a knife and stabbed his wife in the back. She was admitted to the hospital for her injuries and soon recovered. No charges were brought against her. Her husband, however, was brought to trial and, being found guilty of stabbing his wife, was sentenced to jail for a year and a half.

Incidents such as these are commonplace here and do not surprise or astonish the local residents. It is hard to find college or university girls who remain virgin until they are married. As a matter of fact Westerners are often surprised that the people of East still expect unmarried girls to remain virgin until the time of marriage.



A SUMMARY OF THE DETAILS OF HIJAB AND THE INTENTIONS OF SHARI‘A

The rules and regulations dealing with hijab as outlined by Shari‘a are comprehensive leaving practically no aspect of a Muslim’s life untouched. The religious, social, psychological, emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and personal practices are all affected by the injunctions of hijab for women and lowering of the gaze for men. Sound guidance has also been given regarding all the hidden and apparent aspects of covering the satr and lowering of the gaze. As you have read previously, the injunctions about hijab were not revealed together at once. At first, there came the aya instructing separation of men and women; then came the injunctions about covering the body, personal beauty, and adornments; then about the use of perfumes, walking, talking, lowering of gaze, and covering the face. Later, the ayas about the Islamic code

of conduct between the opposite sex, which even addressed the inner thoughts and fantasies one has about the opposite sex, were revealed. All these *ayas* make it impossible to believe, even for a moment, that the Shari‘a tolerates any mixing and social intermingling between non-*maḥram* men and women, eventually leading to intimate relations. On the contrary, the type of rules and restrictions placed on women who come out of their homes, makes it abundantly clear that the Shari‘a wants women to understand its position about women leaving the home and that they should avoid leaving their homes.

Why?

So that the flagrant sexual misconduct and turmoil of the past or present period of *Jāhiliyya* do not permeate into their lives. And so that women, in their ignorance and quest for what they perceived to be the greater enjoyments of the *Jāhiliyya* culture, would not renounce their modesty, good character, and upright behavior. Thus, as many faces and models of shamelessness, immodesty and licentious behavior were manifested by the former *Jāhiliyya*, Shari‘a countered them with that many preventive measures for safeguarding the modesty and honor of a woman. The preventive measures established by the Shari‘a successfully fortified the Muslim women from these immodesties and from being affected by the moral degeneration of the modern times.



A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE WOMEN OF THE EAST AND WEST

The noble woman of the East values and protects her modesty and chastity so highly that she veils herself, both literally and figuratively, and limits herself to the four walls of her house. The internally torn woman of the West, by contrast, exhibits everything she has to offer, attracts men and is attracted to them, and leaves her home to knock about aimlessly in cinemas and cafes, malls and bazaars, parks and theatres, exhibitions, and circuses. How does one compare the sinful false vanity of *Jāhiliyya* to the billowing ocean of honor and modesty of Muslim women? As a poet has said,

How do you compare a dead lantern with the light of the sun?

The women of the East and West follow two very different paths: one aims to reach a spiritually-elevated character, while the other strives to fulfill the base physical desires and needs. Likewise, they differ fundamentally and at a secondary level in their mental outlook and outward. How then is it possible for Shari‘a, which is determined to sever all ties with Jāhiliyya culture, to permit any association between the two? And how could it tolerate any resemblances to develop between their widely differing paths? Shari‘a uprooted immodesty and gave the commandment of hijab to chaste and virtuous women so that no similarities remain between Muslim women and the women of the old and new periods of Jāhiliyya.

With all this in mind, the Muslim world should not think that by lifting one lesser condition of hijab, thinking it unnecessary or unimportant, that the rest of the laws will remain inviolable. The nature of man’s base urgings are such that they exert a pressure on all higher human thoughts and actions until they bring them down to their base level. The deplorable state of affairs of shamelessness, immodesty and indecent behavior prevalent in modern society did not reach this junction at once. It was a gradual process which started when they ceded to smaller indecencies, in their lack of wisdom and foresight, and thought them harmless. It was, therefore, inevitable under the law of cause and effect, that once the grip of morality loosened, the shamelessness and indecencies reached epidemic proportions. The point which these societies have now reached are the very abominations that the lesser conditions of hijab were designed to prevent. It is characteristic of human nature that once it encroaches upon the first limit, it becomes successively easier to challenge the major laws until all boundaries have been crossed.

So when the fairer sex in these societies took the major step of abandoning the four walls of their homes in favor of the outside world, it was comparatively easier to take the next step and break the silence of their voices, which had long gone unheard. After this, the faces behind the veils came out and the gaze too gained the freedom to wander, to see and be seen. Raising of the gaze led to the freedom of thought which opposed the very idea of hijab. Clothes were now designed to enhance and reveal a woman’s body; at first, necklines and arms and then legs and thighs were exposed. Thus, all the veils were removed from the private and excitable parts of the human body leading ultimately to complete nudity, which was precisely what the universal laws

of hijab intended to prevent. Today, hundreds of thousands of nudists live in the European and other Western countries. The newspaper *Inqilāb* writes:

In France and Germany, a new trend of complete nudity has begun. Even an association of nudists has been established in Germany which calls itself the National Association of Nudists. Its membership has already reached four hundred thousand, of which women form a vast majority. A 1929 survey revealed that its members numbered over four million.⁶

The newspaper *Madina* in Bajnor, India, reporting on the situation in France, writes:

The people of France, in order to practice their beliefs in naturalism, have established a naturalists' society consisting of several thousand members. They live only on fruit, vegetables, and water, and shun clothing as much as possible, choosing to wear very skimpy bathing outfits instead. The most fanatic among them, however, refuse to wear even those, calling them unnatural and unnecessary. These members have announced that they will cast off all clothing and will live in nude. The members of this club include men, women, children and elderly people and their membership is increasing every day. In Germany, the number of people claiming to be naturalists numbered three million last year, and this year the membership has increased by one million more.⁷

Obviously, after reaching the peak of such shamelessness, open and unbridled sexual promiscuity and fornication is not surprising at all in Western cultures. It was this sexual promiscuity and shamelessness which Islam eradicated by implementing the various commandments of hijab. Do the Muslims not realize that in their blind following of shameless societies, they will one day reach the same peaks of immorality that their Western educators have already reached?

6 Inqilāb, Lahore, Dec. 30, 1929 as quoted in Ta'limāt-e-Islam

7 Madina, May 9, 1929 as quoted in Ta'limāt-e-Islam

وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسْتَةَ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا

...And you will never find a change in Allah's consistent practice.⁸

The truth contained in this aya translates into the principle that whenever Muslims abandon the teachings and practices of our Blessed Prophet ﷺ in favor of using their own intelligence as their guides in life, they are destined for destruction. Salvation can only come by obeying the laws of Allah ﷻ as revealed to our Blessed Prophet ﷺ while reliance on our opinions and abilities leads only to one's downfall.

The social system which the Qur'an and the Sunna give to the world is one which guarantees piety and cleanliness, purity and chastity, respect and inner peace. It is only through Islam that Allah ﷻ has blessed Muslims with honor and glory. Abandoning the ways which are characteristic of Islamic society in favor of foreign cultures and ideas, fashions, and norms, should be repulsive to the very self-respect of Muslims. The non-Muslims of the West are truly dangerous enemies of Muslims. They have convinced the naive and weaker Muslims the necessity of women's "emancipation," thereby engaging them in the same kinds of lewd, indecent, and immoral behavior they follow, in order to destroy the purity and the virtues of Islamic societies and to foster moral diseases within them. These enemies of Islam have insidiously laid all kinds of traps within Muslim societies, to which those Muslims who have a weak attachment to the Qur'an and Sunna, fall prey to with ease.

The moral destruction, lewdness and licentious behavior that the people in Europe, America and other Western countries are suffering from today began with bringing women out in the open. Once in the streets, the doors were open for physical and sexual exploitations, which in turn gave way to lewdness, nudity, and all kinds of other immoral and shameless behavior. A virtuous English woman, sincerely disturbed by the increasingly immoral behavior of women in her own society, wrote an article which was translated and reproduced in an Egyptian monthly magazine, *al-Manār*. She writes:

English women, as a whole, have lost their chastity and virtue. It has become difficult to find women who have kept themselves

pure and not defiled themselves by engaging in illicit behavior. They no longer possess any semblance of modesty or shamefulness, and live their lives with such unlimited and unnatural freedom that it has left them unworthy of being called human beings. We envy the Muslim women of the East who live lives of honesty and piety in obedience of their husbands and who do not let the stains of sin mar their purity and chastity. If they feel pride in their ways of life, they have every right to do so. The time is coming when the commandments of Shari‘a will come to aid and protect the virtue of English women as well.⁹

Anyway, the Qur’an and hadith have elucidated the subject of hijab with such clear and convincing arguments that there no longer remains any room for doubt in the wisdom behind it.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The above discussion makes it abundantly clear how much care Allah ﷻ and His beloved Prophet ﷺ took to present the rulings of hijab and how much detail and clarification is provided for each aspect of hijab, and also the strong wording used to emphasise the importance of following these commandments.

As Muslims we should think! To what extent do we actually follow the Qur’an to which we profess our faith in, and how much concern do we sincerely have for its commandments? Could it be that on the Day of Judgment, as mentioned in the following aya, our Blessed Prophet ﷺ says to Allah ﷻ [about us]:

يَا رَبِّ اِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

...O my Lord, my people had taken this Quran as deserted.¹⁰

We believe in Allah ﷻ and we believe that we will face Him on the Day of Judgment and will be held accountable for each and every

9 Quoted in Ma‘ārif al-Qur’an, vol. 9

10 25:30

action. How then do we expect to meet Him? Will He not say to us, “I revealed to you all the injunctions of how to live your lives and made clear the difference between permissible and forbidden. How closely then did you follow My commands? How much did your character, thoughts, and actions reflect the fear of accountability before Me?”

On the Day of Judgment, we will face our beloved Prophet ﷺ. With the sun reaching right over us, it will be a day of unimaginable misery, torment, and thirst. He will lead us all to the well of *Kauthar* to drink. But have we ever thought about how shall we face him? We, who have spent our whole lives ignoring his teachings and never taking any steps to implement them in our lives; how will we honestly expect him to quench our thirst with his own blessed hands? How can we expect him to intercede on our behalf when we will meet him crushed under the burden of our sins? Have we followed his teachings in our lifestyles, our appearances, our manners of dressing, or in anything else in our lives?

The commandments of hijab are of great importance, though it is true that they are in fact somewhat difficult to follow. But one thing is true beyond any doubt, and that is that whosoever succeeds in following these commandments will have less difficulty in obeying other commandments of Allah ﷻ. This is one of the most bitter pills to swallow in terms of obedience, but it is most beneficial in that it makes it quick and easy for a Muslim to be close to Allah ﷻ.

Today, our standards of piety do not extend beyond reciting endless incantations and rosaries, praying extra *ṣalāt*, reciting the books of *du‘ās*, fasting when possible, giving alms and charity, and obeying those commands which are convenient for us. But, we readily ignore and reject all the rules and prohibitions which interfere in any way with our lifestyle, our self, and our desires. We profess deep love for Allah ﷻ but do not refrain from disobeying Him, even though it is obligatory on us to refrain from all that He has declared forbidden. The foundation of piety is built on seeking Allah’s ﷻ forgiveness for being disobedient and rebellious towards Him. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

إِتَّقِ الْحَارِمَ تَكُنْ أَعْبَدَ النَّاسِ

Refrain from sinning and you will become the most pious of worshippers.¹¹

11 Tirmidhī, *al-Ṣiḥat wa al-Farāgh*

The sin of refusing to observe hijab is more severe than most other sins. For this reason, it is crucial to immediately abstain from this sin and sincerely resolve to observe the rules of hijab. The reasons for this are as follows:

- 1 It is a sin which is committed in the open for all to see. The one committing this sin, without saying a word, is openly declaring to everyone around him that she/he has no regard for Allah's ﷻ commands, and that she/he has revolted against Allah ﷻ. Our Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

كل أمتي معافى إلا المجاهرين

All of my Umma is worthy of forgiveness, except for those who sin openly.¹²

This is not only true for religion, but even those who are disloyal to their governments in this world and commit treason are never forgiven. And what is the punishment for betrayal but death?

- 2 The sinful consequences of refusing to observe hijab are not confined to the one committing the sin only; it encourages and spreads lewd and shameful behavior and ultimately affects the entire society which then suffers the wrath of Allah ﷻ in this world and in the Hereafter. It is commonly observed that such a sin also paves the way for all kinds of other evils such as murder.

Those women who do not observe hijab should ask themselves why they are not doing so. Is it the temporary pleasures and fulfillment of desires which is keeping them from it? They should realize that life in this world is temporal while life in the Hereafter is eternal. They should also realize that by not observing hijab, they embitter their lives in this world and condemn themselves to the Hellfire in the Hereafter. We are not able to bear, even for a second, a burning coal in the palm of our hand. And yet we never think, how will we be able to bear the severe torment of the Hellfire? If we worry that our father or husband

¹² Bukhārī, *Satr al-Muslim 'alā Nafsihi*

or other relatives will disapprove and be upset with us [for observing hijab], then we should think about whether this will be an acceptable excuse before Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgment. Will He forgive us if we say that we did not follow His orders because we feared the displeasure of our family and friends? Even though it is Allah's ﷻ absolute and unalterable law that:

لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق

There is no obedience of the creation in disobedience of Allah ﷻ.¹³

If someone asks us to disobey Allah ﷻ, we are forbidden to obey him. Such a demand must be rejected. We should consider whether this person, whom we are attempting to please by disobeying Allah ﷻ, will be willing to receive and bear the punishment in our place on the Day of Judgment? Allah ﷻ clearly states in the Qur'an:

اذ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتُّبِعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ وَ
قَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّا كُنَّا نَدْرِكُهُمْ لَسَخَّطْنَا لَهُمْ أَمْسَالَنَا لَمَا كُنَّا كَارِهِينَ فَتَنَّبَرَّأُوا مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّأُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يَرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ
أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

[Imagine the time] when those who were followed will disown their followers, and they [all] will see the punishment, and the bonds between them will be cut asunder, and those who followed will say, "We wish we had another [chance to] return [to the world], so that we may disown them as they had disowned us." Thus Allah ﷻ will show them that their deeds were [nothing but] causes of remorse for them, and they are not to come out of the Fire.¹⁴

Ponder on this aya until it becomes clear that on the Day of Judgment, those people who disregarded the commands of Allah ﷻ and disobeyed Him to follow and please others will have enmity toward

13 al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, 18/170 | Ahmad, 2/333

14 2:166-167

each other and all relations between them will be severed. On that day, the young will blame their elders for not allowing them to obey Allah ﷻ and observe hijab. On the other hand, the elders will say that they had no control over them and they only asked them to disobey but did not force them. Then, how frustrated and helpless will those who had disobeyed Allah ﷻ to please others then feel? How miserable will they feel when they realize that the people whom they tried to please and who are culpable for the punishment they must suffer will deny all wrongdoing and instead point their fingers at them and accuse them of wrongdoing? Even Satan, on the Day of Judgment, will say:

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقَّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ
فَاخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا
تَلُومُنِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا
أَشْرَكُمُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Satan will say when the matter will have been decided, “Allah ﷻ promised you a truthful promise while I gave you a promise and did not fulfill it. I had no authority over you, except that I invited you and you accepted my call. So, do not blame me, but blame yourselves. Neither I can come to your help, nor can you come to my help. I disown your associating me with Allah ﷻ in the past. Surely, there is a painful punishment for the unjust.”¹⁵

So, we know that on this day no one will come to anyone else’s aid and every human being will be left alone to answer for his or her own deeds. Even Satan will say to those who followed him, “I had no real power over you, all I could do was to tempt and preach you; you chose to follow me and committed sins of your own free will. I am disgusted with you for associating me with Allah ﷻ and obeying me instead. You were with me in life and you will be with me now. We will go to hell and abide there together.”

For the sake of Allah ﷻ, think! Is the goal in life to gain Allah’s ﷻ pleasure or the pleasure of a few relatives? By Allah ﷻ, those who

sever their worldly relations in this life for the sake of Allah ﷻ will attain heaven here on earth. He, who turned away from people and cut his relations with them solely to gain Allah's ﷻ pleasure and to avoid punishment in his final and everlasting abode in the Hereafter, has attained true success. He will be rewarded with such joy and pleasure that all the joys of this world will seem insignificant and worthless by comparison. As a poet said:

*You shouldn't care if the entire world is angry at you;
So long as your beloved is pleased;
Keep this in mind as you decide;
What should you do and what you shouldn't.*

Let us pray to Allah ﷻ to grant us the courage and fortitude, to bless us with complete īmān, unwavering trust and belief in the Qur'an and the ability to obey His commandments as is His right. May Allah ﷻ shower ṣalāt and salam in great abundance on our beloved Prophet ﷺ, the best of creation and upon his family and his Ṣaḥāba ؓ.

DR. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL MEMON
Lailat al-Eid al-Aḏḥā 1410 A.H.
July 3, 1990



GLOSSARY

Abū al-Qāsim	Literally, means the father of Qāsim; the agnomen of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, derived from the name of his deceased son Qāsim
Adhān	The call for ṣalāt
Bai‘a	An oath of allegiance to submit and obey
‘Abāya	A loose robe worn by Muslim women that covers the entire body from head to toe
Dayyūth	One who tolerates indecency and immorality in his wife or the one who does not maintain honor and decency in his wife
Dīn	Faith, religion, a way of life
Iḥrām	Cloths worn by Muslims during Hajj
Fitna	Trial or tribulation whether of a physical nature or that which misguides one from Allah ﷻ
Ghaḍḍ al-baṣar	Lowering the gaze
Non-maḥram	The antonym of maḥram; a man with whom marriage is permissible and from whom women must observe hijab
Ḥadīth	The sayings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Ḥadīth al-Qudusī	Sayings of Allah ﷻ narrated by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Hijāma	The application of a cup-shaped instrument to the skin to draw blood to the surface for bloodletting
Haj	Pilgrimage of Muslims to Mecca
Ḥalāl	Something that is lawful

Ḥarām	Something forbidden by Allah ﷻ
Palanquin	A palanquin was formerly used to transport one person. It consists of an enclosed litter that was secured onto the back of a camel and was used mainly for women.
Ḥayā	Literally means shyness. In Islamic terminology, ḥayā is the constraint felt within one's conscience and before Allah ﷻ before he commits a sin.
Hijab	Hijab literally means screen, curtain, partition and concealment. As a verb, it means to conceal oneself or hide from the view. In the Shari'a, it means for a woman to cover, conceal or hide herself from the view of men
Hijab bi al-buyūt	Observing hijab by staying inside the home
Hijra	The migration of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ from Mecca to Madina; it marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar
Iblīs	Another name for Satan
'Idda	Waiting period for a woman before she may remarry after being widowed or divorced
Īmān	Faith or belief
Jāhiliyya	Ignorance
Jalābīb	Plural of Jilbāb
Jilbāb	The outer sheet which a woman wraps around her on top of her garments to cover herself from head to toe; it hides her body completely
Jamā'a	Congregational ṣalāt
Ka'ba	The first house built to worship Allah ﷻ in the city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia by the Prophets Ibrāhīm ؑ and his son Ismā'il ؑ
Mahārim	Plural of maḥram
Maḥram	A maḥram is a man with whom marriage is forbidden; women are not required to observe hijab in front of them

Glossary

Makrūh	Something that is not preferred; is undesirable and repulsive
Mā shā Allāh	A phrase uttered when one sees good things or good qualities in someone; it implies that all good is by the will of Allah ﷻ
Masjid	The house of worship for Muslims, commonly referred to as mosque in English
Masjid al-Haram	The Masjid in Mecca which has the Ka'ba in its center
Masjid al-Nabawī	The Masjid of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in Madina
Nafs	The self that is the source of the base desires
Qaṣr	Curtailed of obligatory prayers during journey
Ṣaḥāba ﷺ	Companions of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Ṣaḥābiyāt	Female companions of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Satr	Portion of the body which the Shari'a requires to be covered and which may not be exposed to others
Shari'a	The Laws Derived from the Qur'an and Sunna
Sunna	Traditions of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Sūrat	A chapter in the Qur'an
Tabarruj	Flirtatious behavior and exposing of beauty in order to attract the attention of men
Tabaruḥ al-Jāhiliyya	The lewdness and promiscuity of women in the times of Ignorance prior to the coming of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Ṭawāf	Circumambulation around Ka'ba
Umma	The followers of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
Wājib	Mandatory but a degree less than <i>fard</i>
Zakat	The obligatory charity in Islam



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL MEMON MADANI was born in 1935 in a small town known as Mangrol in Gujrat state, India. He was born in a religious family. He was brought up in a religious environment. After the partition of the Indian subcontinent, his family moved to Pakistan and settled in Karachi. Dr. Ismail completed his formal education in medicine at the Dow Medical College in Karachi in 1961. He also learned the Arabic language and other religious subjects in Darul Uloom Karachi.

In 1963, he was appointed the Medical Officer in Saudi Arabia where he stayed until 1986. Half of this time was spent in the holy city of Madina practicing medicine. However, his practice had become a secondary thing in his life. He was involved in the work of da'wah and met a number of very pious and well-known scholars of Islam. He has been closely related to Shaikh al-Hadith Maulana Zakariya and Shaikh Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.

In 1986, he migrated to Canada with his family. Three of his four sons have memorized the Qur'an and have received formal religious education. All three of them are certified scholars from Darul Uloom in Bury, England. His youngest son, Mufti Husain, has completed the Ifta course from Dabhel, India.

After coming to Canada, he settled in Ontario. Then, he moved to Waterloo where his son Maulana Ibrahim Memon was appointed the Imam of a local masjid. In Waterloo, along with his work of da'wah, he began his quest to establish another Islamic boarding school to train and educate Muslim children in an Islamic environment. After five years of hardwork, he succeeded with the blessings of Allah in establishing Darul-Uloom Al-Madania in Buffalo, New York.

Presently, he resides in Chatham, Ontario, where he and his sons have established Darul Uloom Canada. Dr. Ismail has given up his practice of medicine and has devoted his life for the work of da'wah. May Allah give him strength, good health and a long life to continue his mission.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وآخر دعوانا الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين
وخاتمة النبيين وحيب رب العالمين وعليه واصحابه واتباعه اجمعين
برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين

And our final supplication is that all praise is due to Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds, and may His eternal peace and blessings be upon the Master of the Messengers, the Seal of the Prophets, the Beloved to the Lord of the Worlds, Muhammad ﷺ, and upon his family and companions, and all those who followed him, with Your Mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful.



What is the place of hijab in Islam?

What are the requirements of hijab according to the Qur'an and Sunna?

Are practices such as *niqab* and *burka* cultural or Islamic?

What are the religious benefits of adhering to hijab?

The moral decay and deterioration in our social, cultural and family structure is a direct result of our negligence of the commandments of Allah ﷻ. One such example is our abandoning the commandment of hijab. Unfortunately, many of us, influenced by the West, have convinced ourselves that hijab is a cultural practice which has nothing to do with Islam. The prevalence of this belief has led many sincere Muslims to doubt or question the reality of hijab and its place in Islam.

Dr. Mohammad Ismail Memon Madani makes it self-evident through ayat of Qur'an, detailed explanations from the famous *tafsirs*, and the ahādith that hijab is indeed an Islamic commandment which has been observed by the wives of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the *Ṣahābiyāt* ﷺ, the pious predecessors and our whole Umma for the last fourteen-hundred years. The book details the requirements of hijab according to the Qur'an and Sunna. This book also highlights how hijab is the most effective tool in maintaining peace and purity in society and how abandoning it leads to promiscuity and shamelessness.

Hijab, is one book that should be on the bookshelf of every Muslim home. This book is highly recommended for those who are eager to learn about the Islamic position on hijab and understand the wisdom behind its golden commandments.

DR. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL MEMON MADANI was born in 1935 in Mangrol [Gujarat], India. After the partition between Pakistan and India, his family migrated to Pakistan and settled in Karachi.

His quest for knowledge began as a young student. While studying Medicine at Dow Medical College, he spent much of his free time studying the knowledge of Dīn in Dār al-'Ulūm Karachi. In 1961, he completed Medicine and, shortly thereafter, migrated to Saudi Arabia to serve as a medical officer.

He was a sincere student of the prominent Shaikh al-Hadith Muhammad Zakariyyā Kāndhelwī who taught hadith and other Islamic sciences in Mazāhir al-'Ulūm [Sahāranpūr, India] for nearly sixty years. Dr. Ismail's devotion to his teacher and shaikh quickly made him one of Shaikh Zakariyyā's beloved students. In 1967, he received successionship [*khilāfa*] from Shaikh Zakariyyā.

In 1986, he migrated from Madina al-Munawwara to Canada and later to the United States. In 1992, he founded the largest institute of traditional Islamic sciences in North America, Darul-Uloom Al-Madania in Buffalo, New York. In 2010, he opened Darul-Uloom Canada in Chatham, Ontario, where he currently resides.

\$9.95 USA

\$11.95 CAN.

RELIGION / Islam / Rituals & Practice

ISBN: 978-1-936157-00-6



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